DUCLOS: WORKER-STATESMAN by Raoul Damiens

new Masses
SEPTEMBER 8, 1936
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Lincoln Steffens

By Ella Winter

★

The Kansas Trilby

By Joseph Freeman

★

While Spain Defends Her Own

By Enrique Lumen and I. W. deRivera

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...If we DO say so ourselves

LADIES and gentlemen, friends and comrades. . . . It brings a blush to our already definitely Red cheeks to be talking about ourselves in terms of praise, but we can't help saying that the *new* NEW MASSES, which will make its bow next week, will be a great step forward. These are some of the changes:

New Format

(1) Pictorial covers, by some of America's most famous artists. The first is being done by Rockwell Kent, internationally renowned for his woodcuts and lithographs.

(2) More art work, of both the cartoon and serious variety. We expect that this will give the New Masses the same standing as the old *Masses* in bringing to public notice new artists of great talent.

(3) Changes in make-up style, worked out by Rockwell Kent and our art director, Crockett Johnson, which will make the whole magazine better looking and easier to read.

New Features

(1) A weekly department of running news summary and comment, tying up what happens in Steel with the civil war in Spain, Landon's latest bosh with the strike struggles of the Newspaper Guild. A rounded interpretative summary of news events on a world scale.

(2) A real editorial page, bringing all the force of Marxist polemics to bear upon the great public questions of the day.

(3) A department called "Sights and Sounds," which will give thorough, lively coverage of current developments in the theater, the movies, the radio, the dance, the world of art and music, with indexes of things worth seeing and hearing.

(4) New writers, including some very well-known names. Among the first of such to appear will be Naomi Mitchison, the British novelist, Alfred Lunt and Lynn Fontanne, and Donald Ogden Stewart, outstanding American novelist, playwright, and humorist.

And on Politics

Don't you want to know how Earl Browder's radio fan-mail stacked up? How much there was of it and what it said? Especially, what the folks in his home town of Wichita, Kansas, wrote to him? We'll have an article on it in an early issue, as part of our general campaign coverage, which will be designed to keep you posted right up to Election Day.

You'll want these features to be reaching you promptly, hot off the press. You can do it easily by sending in the attached coupon NOW!

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Next Week

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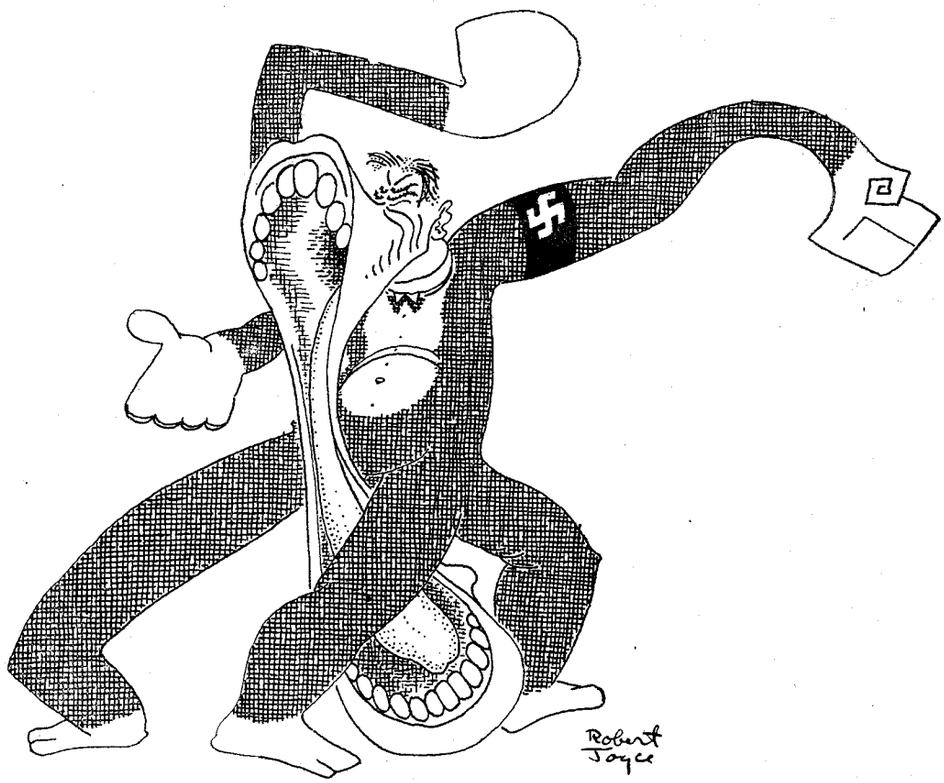
New Masses

SEPTEMBER 8, 1936



"WE MUST FIGHT THE BOLSHEVIK MANIACS!" *Joyce*

Support for Spain

THE attempted bombing of the U.S. destroyer *Kane* under circumstances which manifestly indicate the guilt of the Spanish fascist insurgents, has forced into bold relief the illusory nature of Roosevelt's neutrality policies in the Spanish conflict. It brands as untenable and dangerous a policy which countenances the depredations of the fascist enemies of the Spanish people, while the legitimate government of Spain, engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the foes of democracy and peace, is virtually blockaded.

That the Hearst press should feign indignation over the attempt on the *Kane,* can surprise no one. Little would it strain its conscience to charge the Spanish government—which has given abundant proof of its good faith, and has much to lose and nothing to gain from an act hostile to the United States government—with responsibility in such incidents. No infamy is too great for Hearst, if it will help to drag the United States into war on the side of fascism.

In his Chautauqua address, President Roosevelt said some harsh words about aggressive powers. Germany and Italy, believing that "they have become the unique depositories of ultimate truth and right," are attempting to foist fascism upon the Spanish people. Still, the government of the United States has maintained a policy of pseudo-impartiality which, by barring the shipment of supplies to beleaguered Spanish democracy, in fact militates in favor of the fascist cause in Spain. The equal treatment accorded to the Spanish government and the treacherous insurgents, in the representations made by the United States government over the *U.S.S. Kane* incident, is another sign of this equivocal policy.

Shall the United States remain partner to a blockade against the legally constituted and friendly government of Spain? To say that this course would preserve peace is to fall victim to illusion. The defeat of Spanish democracy as a result of foreign fascist aid would directly challenge the security of France and of Great Britain. It would serve to precipitate a European and world war. On the other hand, a friendly attitude by the United States government toward the democratic government of Spain could stimulate the forces of democracy and peace in Europe. Clearly expressed sympathy for the Spanish Republic would aid immeasurably in influencing France and Britain to discontinue those features of their non-intervention policy which are making of Spain "Europe's Ethiopia." And, confronted with a common and determined alignment of the non-fascist Powers, Italy and Germany would be obliged to halt their intervention in Spain.

Worse and More of It

FATHER COUGHLIN'S latest pronouncement on the Jews indicates that open anti-Semitism is not yet a profitable device for American demagogues. That is the best that can be said for it. The worst is that by concealing his true purpose in a cloud of subtleties, the good father will be the better enabled to spread his particular brand of poison.

In the full-page editorial on the "Jewish question" which appeared in the last issue of *Social Justice,* Father Coughlin's mouthpiece explains how the Jews became the "money-changers" of the world. He blames the un-Christian Christians for it, and speaks with indignation of the "shame of Jewish persecution." But for all his commiseration, he ceaselessly drives home the point that the Jews *are* the world's money-changers. And anyone who has ever heard Coughlin excoriate money-changers will realize that this attempt to make "money-changer" synonymous with "Jew" is a crafty device to enable him to stir up anti-Semitism without having to bear the responsibility for such criminal action.

Coughlin, through the editorial in *Social Justice,* resorts to another dodge —one of the oldest in the history of anti-Semitism. He distinguishes between "good Jews" and "bad Jews," thus seeking to conciliate some Jews and many Christians who would otherwise turn away from him in disgust. It is an easy task, once the germ of prejudice has been planted, to nourish it into a full-grown plant which will ultimately flower in hatred for an entire people.

If there were one grain of honesty in Father Coughlin's professed concern for the Jews, he would blast away at his international capitalists without reference to race. Aside from such second-fiddlers as the Rothschilds and Barney Baruch, there are the Rockefellers, the Vanderbilts, the du Ponts, the Fords, and the Mellons, not to mention William Randolph Hearst o-

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even foreign-exchange broker Frank Keelon, who literally engages in money-changing when he is not busy advising Father Coughlin on his silver investments.

Progress in Spain

THOUGH the Junker planes and Caproni bombers in the hands of the insurgents remain a grave menace, the Spanish government continued to register slow progress in its drive against the principal fascist centers during the week. Its advances in the mountains north of Madrid and the departure of a column in the direction of Burgos have been particularly heartening. At Irun, in the longest sustained battle of the war, loyalist forces have up to this writing succeeded in repelling a concentrated fascist attack. The siege of Toledo and Oviedo continues, with People's Front forces also closing in on the Rightist military stronghold of Saragossa. Moreover, rumors of unrest among the natives of Spanish Morocco, as well as signs of disaffection among Moors and Foreign Legionnaires engaged in fighting on the mainland, are increasingly recurrent.

The fascist generals have been making life rather trying for correspondents who have sought to pass off Franco and De Mola to American readers as exponents of good old-fashioned liberalism. Unable to contain their democratic impulses, these worthies blurted out their governmental program last week. From Burgos they announced that upon establishing themselves in power they would proceed to take the lands away from peasants who possessed them, outlaw strikes, "exterminate" all Leftists, abolish Parliament and, lest anyone still doubt their libertarian integrity, restore the crown to the head of Alfonso XIII.

Mussolini's Headache

THE foolhardy behavior of Italian fascism in the present European crisis may be more easily understood in the light of its desperate economic straits and its continued difficulties in Ethiopia. Rome's official gazette has announced that a bond issue will be floated abroad in order to bolster the fascist financial structure, strained to the breaking point by the cost of the Ethiopian conquest. This confirms previous rumors that the patriotic Duce is seeking to place Ethiopia in hock with French and British bankers.

Meanwhile, General Graziani faces hard going in Ethiopia. The blessings of Pius XI have proved of little avail to him. In fact, the diplomatic correspondent of the Manchester *Guardian* reports that "*Italian losses in killed and wounded have been bigger since than before the fall of Addis Ababa.*" The organizers of the Italian occupation, according to this informant,

> are not proving equal to the task of holding the country. The rails of the Jibuti-Addis Ababa Railway are still being torn up by Abyssinian bands, so that the Italian main line of communication is being constantly broken . . . all Italian outposts are subjected to constant attack by Abyssinian bands. For the Italians the war has been much more like real warfare than it was before its formal termination was announced.

Holy Humbug

MORE and more, current history takes on a medieval air, a quality that smacks of miracles and matters superhuman. Besides the London editor who hears voices, there is Dr. Frank Buchman, who finds God a "perpetual broadcasting station, and all you have to do is tune in." Buchman listens in on God at least a half hour every day and then passes the word along.

Last week God told Buchman that "Human problems aren't economic. They're moral . . . and they could be solved through a God-controlled Fascist dictatorship." Buchman wasn't surprised, though. He knew that the Lord had been edging along toward fascism, and he approved. "I thank heaven," he told reporters, "for a man like Adolf Hitler."

For several years Dr. Buchman's Oxford Movement for saving upper-class souls has increasingly taken on a swastika complexion. The next issue of the NEW MASSES will contain a more detailed discussion of this pious fraud, but in the meantime it is a relief to have it stamped by its leader for the thing it is.

How to Answer Hearst

SEATTLE employers have lost no time lining up behind Hearst. Faced with solid labor support of the Newspaper Guild strike which has prevented Hearst's *Post-Intelligencer* from appearing for over two weeks, the employers have reverted to a vigilante "Law and Order Committee," with an executive body named the "Secret Six." A similar group, it may be remembered, was formed after the Pacific Coast maritime strike two years ago for the purpose of smashing the Northwest labor movement by terrorism. At that time the labor newspaper, *Voice of Action,* exposed the organization and broke up its offensive.

Now, in the name of "free speech" and "constitutionalism," the employers again adopt Hearst tactics. Far more is at stake than even the strike of the Newspaper Guild. On September 30, agreements between employers and maritime unions expire. The owners have already threatened a drive against the waterfront unions. The Guild strike is utilized to win public opinion away from organized labor and to perfect strong-arm methods to be launched against the longshoremen, seamen, and other marine workers.

But Seattle labor, with middle-class groups supporting it, has consolidated to meet the importation of thugs and Hearst violence. Mayor John E. Dore keeps the police out of the strike. He expressed popular Seattle opinion when he stated:

> Whether the citizens of this city are going to run this town or whether William Randolph Hearst is going to run it is the main issue at stake.

The Guild asks only for conference and the right to bargain collectively. Hearst misrepresents the issue by maintaining that the strikers demand a "closed shop." He refuses to meet Guild representatives or discuss their demands. Instead he organizes terrorist groups among the employers to beat and maim and kill—the method perfected by his friends Mussolini and Hitler, who provide Hearst with the basis of his "Americanism."

Freedom vs. Reaction

"WE CHAMPION the unrestricted freedom of speech, press, radio, and assembly and the right to organize and strike. We call upon the people to safeguard these traditional liberties."

Thus speaks the platform of the Communist Party. And with good reason, as events of last week bear witness. At a meeting in Toledo, O., addressed by James Ford, Communist vice-presidential candidate, members of the Black Legion threw a gas-bomb into the crowded hall, gassing several hundred people. In Peoria, Ill., five members of the Workers Alliance who dared demand adequate relief at an

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open-air meeting, were sentenced to six months' imprisonment. In Peekskill, N. Y., the Klan announced its revival, and promised to ride again, beginning Labor Day. And William Gallacher, Communist Member of Parliament, was refused entry to this country because of the political party to which he belongs.

The state hurriedly prosecutes demonstrators who boarded the Nazi liner *Bremen* and protested against the Hitler government's intervention in Spain on the side of the fascists. But the U.S. State Department neglects to take the necessary steps to free Lawrence Simpson, native-born American seaman, who was forcibly removed from an American vessel months ago and who has been imprisoned in Germany ever since for "treason" against a foreign government.

But the picture is not wholly black. Pressure has forced action against organized terrorists who style themselves "defenders of the Constitution." Reactionary Attorney-General Webb of California has been compelled to prosecute twenty-one vigilantes who kidnapped two workers last spring and tarred and feathered them. After a maximum of delay, Webb found it would be political suicide not to take action.

In Michigan, the Black Legion cases reveal much the same situation. Pressure alone can assure even the semblance of rigorous prosecution. So far, only the small fry (with the exception of Virgil F. Effinger, secretary of the Black Legion, who was allowed to escape) have been indicted. As terrorists go to trial, the LaFollette Senate Committee has started to investigate scab-herding agencies doing a profitable business providing thugs to industry. Equally important is the promise to investigate munition manufacturers who supply arms, bullets, and gas to large corporations to be used against workers.

The drive intensifies against civil rights. The Communist platform warns, "Democracy or fascism, progress or reaction—this is the central issue of 1936."

It Is Our Business

GENERAL SMEDLEY BUTLER is sincerely opposed to war. Neither he nor any of his three sons will ever fight except on American soil, literally in defense of their country

The American League Against War and Fascism is just as sincerely opposed to war as the General. But the League is not content to wait until this country is sucked into war and then simply refuse to participate. In the last analysis such a policy is futile in the extreme. It would not accomplish the desired objective of saving thousands of Americans from death, nor in warding off the unfathomable chaos that war brings to soldier and civilian alike.

Therefore, when Spain's legally constituted, democratic government suddenly found itself threatened by a band of crass war-mongers — directly aided and abetted by one dictator whose sword is still warm with the blood of Ethiopians and another who is arming to the teeth for new slaughter—what could the League Against War and Fascism, or any lover of peace, do but lend aid to the Madrid republican regime?

Yet General Butler, in his zeal for peace, condemns a League appeal to raise funds for the Loyalists. "What in hell," the general asks, "is it our business what's going on in Spain? . . . I've been sitting here all night hearing you people get us into another war."

General Butler forgets that Spain has declared war on no nation. It is not a belligerent. It is a peaceful government intent on crushing a bloody uprising fomented by a small fascist clique—a band of jingoes who would make it easier for Hitler and Mussolini to turn the world —including the United States—into a shambles. No, General, the League Against War and Fascism would not get us into war. It would help to keep us out of war in the only way that is possible: by aiding those who would keep war out of the world.

Defend the Ewerts!

FASCIST atrocities mount. We hear and read about them daily. We run the risk of taking them for granted. Let us not be callous in a single instance. Though the front pages remind us daily of Spain, let us not forget Brazil—or the Ewerts.

Arthur Ewert, former Reichstag deputy, and his wife Elise have been in a Brazilian dungeon since December of last year. Now the news comes from Brazil that Arthur Ewert is to be placed on trial before a fascist tribunal. And President Vargas has signed a decree ordering the deportation of Elise Ewert to Nazi Germany. This would mean a frightful fate.

A number of American liberal organizations and individuals have protested to the Brazilian ambassador in Washington against the sadistic disposition of Mrs. Ewert's case. They are urging the Brazilian government not to deport Mrs. Ewert to a concentration camp in Nazi Germany, but to let her

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go to a country of her own choice.

The NEW MASSES endorses these efforts on behalf of Arthur and Elise Ewert. We urge our readers to send protests to Oswaldo Arhana, Brazilian ambassador in Washington, and defense funds to the Joint Committee for the Defense of the Brazilian People, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

Books in Uniform

STUDENTS at the University of Pennsylvania asking at the library for Earl Browder's book, *What Is Communism?*, one of the volumes used in an economics course, receive copies with whole chapters torn out. Vandals? Yes; but the vandals are the college authorities themselves who have ordered these chapters ripped out. Among the chapters removed are the following: "Who Are the Americans?"; "Fascism: American Brand"; "Huey Long's Assassination"; "Father Coughlin: Priest or Politician?"; "The Negro People and Labor"; "What About Religion?"; "The Family and Revolution"; "Where Socialism Already Exists." The excuse given for these mutilations is that the omitted sections are "irrelevant" to the subject of economics and that they deal with "personalities." Several of the titles alone are enough to disprove the charge of irrelevance. Yes, persons are named in these chapters, but the names represent economic and political forces of critical significance. To omit them is to rob the discussion of any relevance to economic reality. Moreover, the same names appear in other books. A strict application of the principle which has led to the indefensible mutilation of Browder's book would compel the mutilation of most of the books on the library's shelves. Is it too much to warn that the mutilation of books looms as a prelude to the burning of books?

Voices in the Air

A ROTHERMERE editor sitting in his London office suddenly heard a deep Russian voice addressing "Comrades of the Red Forces." The voice, according to Britain's Joan of Arc, uttered the words: "I have no doubts about you and feel convinced you have no doubts about your leader." The editor, who knew that only Reds call each other "comrade," at once identified the "clearly recognizable" voice as that of Stalin. How would it occur to him that if the Russians wanted to keep their military preparations a secret they would not broadcast them to the other end of Europe?

This understandable error, however regrettable in the interests of journalism, by the sheerest chance proved highly gratifying to Germany's Nazis. For days the Hitler propaganda machine had been puffing up the Russian threat as an excuse for doubling the Reich army. And all at once, out of a clear sky, the leading papers of Europe and America print a bristling speech by Stalin. The London *Daily Mirror* hints darkly at a "mystery propaganda station," but so far no one has even hazarded a guess as to what country would harbor such a station.

The Diplomacy of Desperation

THE agreement not to intervene in Spain—more honored in the breach than in the observance—has given Hitler the opportunity to extend military service from one to two years, which in effect doubles the strength of the German standing army. By October 1936, the Reich army will be one-and-a-half million strong, not including quasi-military formations such as the S.S. police. The excuse for this drastic measure is as usual the Soviet Union. Hitler is becoming less and less reserved in his statements on Russia, which is being subjected to provocations unexampled in diplomatic history.

But the increase in the army also has an internal significance. The room for economic maneuvers rapidly contracts. Increases in production under capitalism involve disproportionate development of different industries, but never before on such a scale as in Germany. While many of the light "civil" industries producing finished goods for the consumer are still at less than 50 percent of their 1929 level, the iron and steel industry—the basis of armament manufacture—is at 103 percent of capacity, or 15 percent above its 1929 peak, and can no longer expand without further heavy capital investments. If it ceases to increase its output, the "boom" must come to a disastrous end. Hence Dr. Schacht's visit to Paris and his desperate attempt to raise a foreign loan. For the domestic money and capital market is being drained dry by heavy government long- and short-term borrowing. The German expenditure on armaments in 1935 alone was stated in the British House of Commons to be four billion dollars, or about a fifth of the national income.

But whether the armament boom continues or not, the standard of living of the vast majority of German people is falling rapidly. On the conservative estimate of Mr. Rawlins, British commercial attaché in Berlin, who as an official observer must accept the German official figures, the cost of living has risen 15.20 percent since 1933. The official cost-of-living index allows the worker one shirt a year and four shaves a month. In the words of Mr. Rawlins, "in the interests of the community . . . wages must be *kept low* in spite of the rising price of foodstuffs, and the community must go without certain commodities formerly considered necessaries."

What is worse, many of those articles still retained as necessary have deteriorated in quality. And now the 1936 crop expectations have turned out too high, so that more fodder must be imported, thus heightening the strain on the foreign-exchange balance and raising the cost of living still further.

Lack of purchasing power on the part of the masses and unbalanced development of industry, the twin factors precipitating crises under capitalism, operate in an aggravated form in fascist Germany. So serious is the situation that, in the opinion of Mr. Rawlins, *"no conceivable internal measure can serve to extricate Germany from her precarious position."* Fascism in Germany moves inexorably toward economic breakdown. Its only alternative is foreign aggression, war against its small neighbors and against France and the Soviet Union, a war bound to engulf the rest of the world.

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The Kansas Trilby

JOSEPH FREEMAN

PRELIMINARY ballyhoo for Governor Landon pictured him as the Kansas Coolidge. That myth was connected with the cure-all which the little man from Topeka was about to offer the American people: economy, balancing the budget. But as the campaign goes on it seems the Republican sloganeers were wrong. Alf Landon is really the Kansas Harding, the amiable instrument chosen and animated by a gang of unscrupulous reactionaries with loot in their eyes.

Liberal gagmen have been quick to spot the boob touches in the new prophet of normalcy. They think Landon is not dangerous because he was silly enough to get off a bull like "America is full of Americans." That's where the sophisticates are as sophisticated as a two-day-old calf. Harding may have been a good guy, but it was the Ohio gang that ran the White House; and the very shallowness of Landon makes him all the more pliable in the hands of his backers.

Secretary Ickes has pointed to the spectre of Hearst over the White House. He might have added a few of Hearst's associates in the Republican campaign—the du Ponts, the Al Smiths, the Liberty League. There's no question, however, about Hearst's role as driver of the Landon bandwagon, or his position as America's fascist No. 1. The whole nasty set-up in the Republican high command was described succinctly and accurately by Secretary Ickes when he said that Landon is a Trilby, Hearst the Svengali. If you want to get into communication with the Republican candidate for president, Ickes said, the surest way is through Mr. Hearst.

In proof of this assertion, Secretary Ickes produced a significant episode in the recent history of the Republican general staff, and backed his tale with documents. The story concerns a gentleman named George F. Harding, old-time Republican politician of Chicago, crony of the notorious Mayor Thompson of the Capone era, today a member of the Republican National Committee. Mr. Harding was anxious to get busy in the campaign, and wanted to talk matters over with what Ickes aptly termed the "highest source of power and authority in the Republican party." Therefore, Mr. Harding flew to San Simeon to confer with Mr. Hearst. As a practical fellow he wasted no time on trifles; he did not stop off at Topeka to see Landon; he went on directly to the Big Boss. Mr. Hearst talked things over with Mr. Harding, and later, when Mr. Harding returned to his hotel, a Hearst messenger handed him an illuminating letter from the Lord of San Simeon.

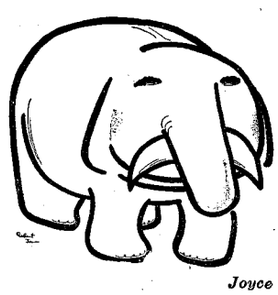
This letter shows that Hearst is actually running the Republican Party. Mr. Harding, a politician seasoned in the Thompson machine, urged that Landon be kept from making too many speeches. The smart advice was given not to Landon directly but to his Svengali, William Randolph Hearst. The Chief was quick to see its advantages. "I am very much impressed," he wrote to Harding, "by what you had to say about Governor Landon not making too many speeches."

Now anyone who has heard the Kansas Harding over the radio could give you any number of reasons why he should talk as little as possible. Raymond Clapper, a Scripps-Howard writer attached to the Landon campaign train, explains gently that Landon doesn't enjoy the stage stuff that attends his speaking appearances. It seems that the Kansas governor, who sits up like a trained poodle at the sound of Hearst's voice, is terrified by the sound of his own. He speaks without facial expression, without emotion, without warmth.

But that is not the reason why Svengali-Hearst wants Trilby-Landon to keep quiet. He said he wanted Landon to lay off talking because too many speeches would give the Democrats a chance to criticize him. That in itself is a pretty damaging admission. Governor Landon promised in his acceptance speech that he would discuss the problems of government in detail. Hearst, a much shrewder fellow than Landon, realizes that the one thing a reactionary candidate dare not do is to discuss the problems of government in detail.

So far, the Republican candidate has made three speeches. At his birthplace in Middlesex, Pa., he delivered about a fortnight ago a touching sermon on the American way of life. From this sermon, 130,000,000 Americans facing one of the most critical periods in their history learned the very important fact that every winter the Kansas governor sends to Crawford County for his maple syrup. Then the Republican candidate warned his audience that the American way of life is being challenged. There are people, he said, who are "wondering whether we may not have to scrap our American institutions."

It's a sad thing, but in a way the governor is right. There *are* people who are very active trying to scrap certain American institutions. For instance, freedom of speech, press, and assembly, guaranteed by the Constitution; and the right, embodied in the Declaration of Independence, of the people to throw off the yoke of any government which becomes oppressive.



Joyce

There are a number of reactionaries who are trying to scrap these foundations of the American way of life, and they are all pals of Mr. Landon. Most prominent among the termites eating their way through our democratic institutions is Landon's discoverer and chief backer, the Svengali of San Simeon.

But it was not Hearst the Kansas governor had in mind. He was anxious to contrast the American way of life with the dictatorial ways of Europe which the New Deal monsters are trying to import into this country. It seems that the American way of life has left men and women in this country free from that kind of restrictions. "Our people," Trilby said, "have been free to develop their own lives as they see fit and to coöperate with one another on a voluntary basis."

That's what the lead and zinc miners of Kansas thought. Good Americans all, they wanted to coöperate with each other on a voluntary basis in order to get higher wages and better working conditions. They went on strike in order to develop their lives as they saw fit. But Kansas, too, contains people who want to scrap our American institutions. The governor of that state, a gentleman named Alfred Mossman Landon, sent troops against the American lead and zinc workers. The troops used violence, broke the strike, and the governor of Kansas sent to Crawford County for maple syrup.

Casting his poetic glance over our great republic, Landon said to his West Middlesex audience: "We see men and women and children living together as families in homes. We see that the family and the home are the foundation of national life. . . . We see them, generally speaking, traveling from the cradle to the grave without ever feeling the coercive or directing hand of government, except in so far as they may have transgressed the rights of others."

When Hearst instructed Landon not to talk too much, he must also have told him not to see too much. Not far from West Middlesex, Pa., lies the town of Aliquippa, the home of Bill Mossman, uncle to the Republican candidate for president and—publicity man for the Jones & Laughlin Steel Company. In the American town of Aliquippa, Uncle Bill has been busy aiding the steel barons establish what Nephew Alf calls a "freedom of enterprise which . . . exists

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not for the few, but for all." Even the New York *Times* admits that everyone of Aliquippa's 30,000 inhabitants depends on the Jones & Laughlin Co. for a living. The steel company owns the street-car system, the water supply, hundreds of acres of improved farm land and 600 company houses in which the employees have to live. The company also has its own police force, a tough outfit of labor-slugging thugs. The National Labor Relations Board reports that union organizers who arrive in Uncle Bill Mossman's Aliquippa are spied upon by the steel company's private dicks. This is the Hearst-Landon notion of the American way of life.

Not far from West Middlesex is another typical American town, Weirton, West Virginia. It's owned by E. T. Weir, Liberty League tycoon, member of the Republican finance committee. This gentleman, too, believes in the Hearst-Landon way of life. He wants to keep out such dangerous importations from abroad as bona-fide trade unions. He is for Landon because Landon is for company unions.

But don't underestimate the Republican high command. *Ipse dixit.* Hearst said, don't let the sap talk too much. If he must talk let him equivocate. Landon was handed the formula: "Relief must be continued as long as the need for it exists." How long will that need exist? Until election day? And what kind of relief? The Kansas governor has said that the federal government should keep out of relief. Such matters should be left to states. Look at the Republican state of New Jersey. There the federal government relegated direct relief to the state, and the state relegated it to the local communities, and in those communities children have literally died of hunger.

This is what Trilby-Landon means by the American way of life. He can't mean anything else. In his own state of Kansas the relief outfit compels a family of three to live on $1.08 a week.

It must have been a lively meeting at Hearst headquarters which invented the method of having Landon talk without talking frankly. At Chautauqua, Trilby buried his head in a manuscript on education. He made a grand liberal gesture; he said he was against the teachers' loyalty oath, sponsored by Svengali-Hearst. The next day, the Hearst papers said editorially that on this point Landon's stand was "regrettable." But the Hearst hack who wrote that editorial did so with his tongue in his cheek. After the regrets, applause. Had not Landon added that a teacher who puts forward his own pet theories in the classroom was no longer a teacher but a *propagandist?*

There are plenty of reactionary laws to take care of propagandists. In Kansas, Landon explained, "we insist that no teacher should be required to take any oath not required of all other citizens." He might have added that in Kansas there is a criminal-syndicalist law to take care of teachers who put forth their pet theories, who are *propagandists.* In fact, there are thirty-five states with criminal-syndicalism acts, sedition laws, red-flag laws, and criminal-anarchy statutes. Under these laws, a citizen, whether he be teacher, miner, engineer, or farmer, may be arrested for mere membership in a Left party, for mere possession of Left literature. In Oregon they clapped one man into jail for "associating" with Communists. He thought the American way of life allowed him to choose his own friends.

"Work hard son, and you'll be a great man like Roosevelt—I mean Theodore."

The Chautauqua sermon was typical of Landon's campaign so far: vague platitudes plus evasion of basic issues plus sly references to reactionary policies. But what can you expect from Hearst's candidate? A tory dares not mention the widespread unemployment among teachers, the inadequate schooling in many sections of the country. He dares not mention these things because toryism is responsible for them. That was why Landon said not a word about his own closing of 458 schools in Kansas during the past year, or about the cutting of salaries for Kansas teachers to as low as $25 a month. He did say, however, that the federal government must keep out of the public schools. Had he amplified this statement with any degree of honesty, he would have added: *The federal government must stay out of the public schools in order to save taxes for the rich; its staying out will mean further closing down of schools and further wage cuts for teachers.*

In Buffalo, Landon opened his oration on taxes with a series of truisms, a rhetorical trick as old as the Sophists. The government must guard and preserve its source of income. . . . This is a question of the fairness of the kinds of taxes that are levied. . . . The present taxes press most heavily on the mass of the people, especially through indirect and camouflaged levies. But the order of a rhetorical trick is to state a partial truth in order to convey a lie. Landon was trying to create the impression that the New Deal *alone* was responsible for these heavy tax burdens on the people. He did not say that most of the indirect and concealed levies were enacted under Republican Hoover. He used the year 1932 as a basis for comparison on the rise and fall of taxes. In that year, indirect levies constituted 41.5 percent of the total taxation. Why did not the Kansas governor point out that by 1933, the last Hoover fiscal year, indirect taxes had leaped to 58.3 percent of the total?

Obliquely, Landon gave away the real reason for his evasion. He approves the Hoover-Hearst program of taxing the poor. Nowhere in his Buffalo speech did he say that if he entered the White House as president he would repeal the indirect levies which oppress the mass of Americans. He had not one word of condemnation for the sales tax which Hoover tried to put over in 1932, or for the sales tax which Hearst is urging today—that open tax which many states impose.

There was only one tax which Landon specifically said he would repeal. If elected, he will abrogate the tax on corporation surpluses passed by the last session of Congress. He made it unmistakably clear that he wants to reduce the taxes of the rich. Against this tax, the usually reserved Kansan opened the flood-gates of rage and vituperation. In spite of George Harding's advice and Willie Hearst's instructions, Landon let the cat out of the bag. He specifically proposed that most of the federal government's revenue be raised by "indirect taxes levied on the net income of individuals and corporations." To do this, the government would have to increase the number of taxpayers or increase the rate of taxation or both.

But if taxes are to be increased, who is to bear the burden? Landon answered that question by denouncing the surplus-profits tax. If you oppose even the mildest increase in the taxes of the rich, you can raise the necessary revenue only by increasing the taxes of the poor. Landon's notion of the American way of life is the notion of Hearst and the Liberty League: spare the rich and soak the poor.

Wall Street's New York *Times,* traditionally a Democratic organ, has been lukewarm in its opposition to Landon. Its latest effort to whitewash the Republican candidate was last week's editorial in which it tried to dissociate him in the public mind from Hearst.

"The whole attempt to represent Mr. Hearst as the political creator and controller of Governor Landon," the *Times* said on August 29, "was from the first artificial and now has become little short of ridiculous."

The Hearst press hastened to reprint this editorial. That is logical enough. Every Svengali wants his Trilby to appear a free and autonomous personality. But this deception crumbles the moment you consider the actual facts. Hearst was the first to boom Landon for president; he inspired and engineered the nomination; he maps Landon's strategy.

As one watches the campaign of the Kansas Trilby, one realizes more and more sharply that he is not an amiable sap but the most serious menace on the political horizon today, the mouthpiece of America's most reactionary financiers and industrialists.

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While Spain Defends Her Own

A Militiaman's Diary

ENRIQUE LUMEN

IN THE quiet village of R—— which we took possession of upon leaving Madrid three weeks ago, the leadership of our column learned that certain individuals who had enrolled in the militia under rather shady circumstances had been committing acts which tended to discredit the army of anti-fascist toilers. We soon realized that it was a matter of a few rascals, fellows who were not connected with the political parties and had no trade, who made trips between Madrid and the fighting front, transporting their petty loot while the proletarian militiamen were busy on the firing line. We of the military and political leadership of the column set about perfecting our organization. This was the only way of discovering who the delinquents were. Anyone who was not responsible to a labor organization or to a political party of the People's Front would immediately be arrested and sent back to Madrid, but we did not find it necessary actually to apply this prophylactic measure—we were surprised to find that provocative elements took to their heels at the first sign of a shake-up.

After several conferences of the group leaders, our column now stands splendidly organized. It is a disciplined military body governed by chiefs, officers, and petty officers who have been democratically elected by the militiamen themselves. Our officers, in contrast to the brutal, authoritarian clique which rules the old monarchist army, are fraternal comrades, militiamen who have been elected to their posts because of their proven ability as organizers and their political and military understanding.

During rest time the militiamen practice the handling of arms, organize parades, read, and carry on political discussions. A daily bulletin is published at the front. I edit it. Through the bulletin we not only give instructions to the militia but provide information and guidance to the people in the villages rescued from the fascists. Symbolically enough, our daily is called *Advance*. We expect before long to find better printing facilities than are now available, for our column is firmly advancing. Our brave comrades are recovering towns, *caserios*, mountains, and strategic points. Our artillery is powerful. We are constantly extending our lines of communication, by telephone, telegraph, and highway.

The peasants in the region, acting on the advice of Colonel Mangada, have returned to tend their crops, without by any means neglecting their armed watch over the villages. You can see them at work, sickle in hand and a rifle strapped to the back, harvesting and fighting for the common cause. Though they are city fellows, our militiamen get along splendidly with the peasants. Whenever the Mangada column passes, it seals a bond of unity between the manual and intellectual workers of the city and these rural toilers, who, partly through instinct, perceive the true content of this tremendous battle for liberty.

The Mangada column provides a formidable military defense of the republic and the people. It will surely be one of the best divisions of our future regular army. Step by step, firmly and with vigor, we are crushing fascism in the vast region of Avila, confident that, where the Mangada column has passed, not a village has remained unenlightened, nor a single enemy of the people at work. The weeds cannot survive in our ranks. There is not a sign of a thief or a fascist around. What a pruning season this is for us! We are cleaning up the age-old blemishes of Spain—the rotten trunks and branches of feudalism and past ages.

Three Interviews

I. W. de RIVERA

SINCE the military and fascist insurrection drove the Spanish people into civil war, Martinez Barrios, the president of the Cortes, has been stationed in the Mediterranean harbor Alicante from which he organizes the supply of provisions for Madrid and the front. Fast transport service brings him to Madrid in a few hours. I caught the burly and active leader of the most conservatively inclined party of the People's Front, the Union Republicana, as he was rushing from his desk at the Ministry of Marine, where the Ministerial Council is permanently in session.

"La Passionaria," the Spanish Communist leader.

"You want to learn about the coöperation of the different parties of the People's Front? Naturally there were certain difficulties to be overcome at the beginning, though never among the responsible leaders. Here unity has prevailed from the first. We insist on at least fulfilling every plank of the February election program on which the People's Front depends. Since the fascist rising threatens the achievements and the future plans of the People's Front, unity has been stronger than ever. The Spanish people have once again proved the indomitable strength of their character and temperament, their determined will to be self-reliant. Neither soldiers nor government bureaucrats nor clerics nor judges nor political parties have influence and authority enough to force a foreign yoke on the nation. Spain *is* the People's Front, which will resist its enemies, the enemies of democracy, to the end."

INDALECIO PRIETO is the leader of the Socialist Party. Although he is not a member of the government, he is now its permanent collaborator at the Ministry of Marine. "The People's Front," he says, "shows us that the will of the masses cannot be broken. It brought us victory in the elections. Thirty thousand prisoners were released from the slow tortures of the jails, thousands of political refugees returned to their native land. Agricultural workers finally received land. In these last few weeks the People's Front has shown its real value; all its members, with a sure eye for realities, have made it clear that they will not tolerate any political and social step backwards in our country. The rebellion has not reckoned with its opponents, whose force it completely underestimated. Every day with each victory obtained by the masses, the People's Front brings a further example of its tremendous value."

LARGO CABALLERO, General Secretary of the U.G.T., in blue overalls and open shirt, mingles with the militiamen in the Guadarrama Mountains. "The People's Front?" he asks. "Here is the People's Front!" and he points to the militia which inspires him as the living wall of defense against the storm of fascist bullets. "The captain there belongs to the 'Izquierda Republicana,' the party of President Azaña. These men here are Socialists, those Communists——" A voice interrupts him. A nurse steps forward. "And I belong to the women's branch of the Union Republicana, Barrios's party." Caballero presses her hand and then turns toward me. "Do you want a better example of coöperation?"

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In Defense of a Free Spain

NORMAN THOMAS

IT is very disquieting to see how little American people, including many American workers, understand the Spanish situation. I know of an important old-line labor leader who shrugged his shoulders and said, "Reds or Fascists, what do we care?" By contrast, the generous gift of the International Ladies Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers for the support of the Spanish workers made through the International Federation of Trade Unions is most heartening.

Actually, a victory for the rebels in Spain would mean for that country another night of cruel intolerance and economic exploitation of peasants and workers. It would throw Europe into darkness. It would encourage Mussolini who has already openly tried to aid the rebels. It would surround France with Fascist powers. (Is not the French Government justified in more active support of the Spanish Government than it has yet extended?)

One does not have to approve of what the Spanish Government has done or left undone in detail to hope, first for its unqualified victory through the aid of the gallant workers; and second, for a steady march toward Socialism. It is clear that a mere negative, anti-Fascist republicanism is not enough. Indeed, the very weakness of the government and its lack of a vigorously pushed constructive program, were responsible on the one hand for mob violence from the Left and from the Right, and on the other, for leaving disloyal army officers in a position to start this rebellion. The workers have something to learn from this, but there is no use crying over spilled milk. The Fascist rebellion must be deflated.

ART YOUNG

CAPITALISM is an old man gone insane. Terrified and desperate, but still able to fight with a vicious strength, as a last chance he runs amok. Now it is in Spain, as it was in Italy, Germany, and Austria. With no thought of consequences, this monster is on his final rampage to rule or ruin, and to ruin all hope of progress the world over is preferable to a confession of having outlived his time.

That is the scene as I see it.

The brave men and women in Spain who are fighting this monster at close range exemplify heroism at its height. They voted in overwhelming voice for the kind of government they wanted, and are now finding out how democratic procedure works, if the financial fascists don't want it to work.

Let us help and cheer the Spanish comrades in every way possible. It is not only their crucial hour, but that of all humble and too-tolerant victims of capitalist bestiality and arrogance, wherever it rules.

DOROTHY CANFIELD FISHER

I DON'T see how any civilized man or woman (assuming as I do that one of the elements in every civilized personality is anti-fascism) can read the news from Spain without an eager sympathy for the loyalist forces of the government. After seeing the mass of the people of Italy and Germany, striking hardly a blow in self-defense, allow fascism to usurp control of their government and their daily lives, I have been stirred to enthusiasm by the splendid fight put up by the French democracy against the clutch at power of the fascists in their country. To have this followed by a gallant effort in Spain against the forces of reaction makes one think that the fascist nightmare may be but passing, gives grounds for hope for the future of mankind.

I earnestly hope—and I cannot but believe that all true Americans also hope—for the success of the government of the Spanish republic.

JOE JONES

IN these dogdays of imperialism, political blather, hunger and impending war, when the temptation to sink into lethargy and despair is so strong in the breasts of the faint-hearted, a heroic, a world-shaking, deed has been sadly needed. By their valiant defense of life and liberty against the forces of death and reaction, Spanish workers, peasants and intellectuals of the People's Front are sending out new hope and energy to the oppressed everywhere. They are bringing, too, the realization that fascist murderers, even with all their resources of power and wealth and with the active help and sympathy of their fellows in other lands, cannot prevail against the united will and effort of an aroused people.

JOHN HOWARD LAWSON

IT IS shocking to realize that there are still many people in the United States who do not know that the struggle going on in Spain has a direct bearing on their own liberty and their own lives. The clearest proof that the future of American democracy is involved may be found in the reaction of the whole capitalist press, which has entered a campaign of frantic distortion in its efforts to defend fascism and besmirch democracy. It is significant that there is no precedent in American journalism—not even in the heydey of propaganda against the Russian revolution in 1918 and 1919, for such wholesale corruption as has characterized the handling of the news from Spain.

Westbrook Pegler recently spoke of the integrity of American journalism in comparison to the prostitute press of Germany and Italy. The events of the past month show us how rapidly (and painlessly) the American press can be regimented—and give us a hint of what we may expect under increasing pressure from the forces of fascism.

It is surprising to find that many honest liberal elements in this country are willing to lend themselves to the service of this propaganda machine: for example, no one can question Edna Ferber's sincere liberalism. No one can question the good intentions of Sam and Bella Spewack. But these writers are among those whose articles and interviews have contributed to give a false impression of what is happening in Spain. Edna Ferber congratulates herself on being an American; she is sure that the conflicts which stir Europe are not paralleled in our own country. Can she really be unaware that the forces responsible for the bloodshed in Spain are preparing a similar fate for the people of the United States? Can she really be unaware that the "mob" which she derides in Spain is fighting for the democratic rights for which Americans have died—and for which they may soon be forced to die again?

We must redouble our efforts to reach and mobilize all the friends of truth and democracy. It is especially urgent to reach the vast number of people who sincerely hate fascism, but who give aid and comfort to the fascists by fostering the smug illusion that America is "different." Today the front line of civilization is being held in the Guadarrama Mountains. The citizens' militia of Spain fight for us as well as for themselves. Americans who pretend to be impartial or unconcerned are betraying their own country and their own tradition.

EARL BROWDER

THE heroic struggle of the Spanish people against fascism and medieval barbarism is of the greatest concern to the progressives and anti-fascists throughout the world. On the outcome of the present struggle in Spain will depend the weakening or strengthening of the fight of the forces for peace and progress against fascism and war, everywhere.

The People's Front in Spain must be sup-

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ported by all those who are for democracy, peace and progress, and against fascism, reaction and war. A defeat for the People's Front and the Spanish government will be a defeat for all the forces of democracy and peace, it will place the Spanish people under the iron heel of fascism and strengthen the position of Mussolini and Hitler.

They have already intervened in Spain. They have supplied the fascists with arms and airplanes. Mussolini and Hitler are preparing armed intervention on the side of the Spanish fascists in order to obtain strategic military posts against France, against England, for the coming war.

The overwhelming majority of the Spanish people at the last election demonstrated their opposition to Fascism. The fascists deliberately trampled underfoot the will of the people, democratically expressed in the elections; they fomented disorders and finally provoked a bloody civil war in order to destroy democracy and establish a fascist dictatorship. They are supported by the most reactionary capitalists in all countries. In the United States, Hearst is doing everything in his power to help the fascists and discredit the People's Front and the Spanish government. He tries to mislead the American people by declaring that the fight is between communism and fascism. The struggle is between the forces of democracy and the forces of fascism. We are proud that the foremost champions of democracy are the Spanish Communists and Socialists, that they are the front-line fighters against fascism. The Communist Party of Spain has clearly stated that it is fighting for democracy, peace and order, and against fascist chaos, disorder and terror.

We, in this country, see the forces of reaction organized by Hearst and the Liberty League, attacking our liberties and democratic rights. The Spanish prototypes of Hearst and the Liberty Leaguers have carried their attack to the point of bloody insurrection against the people. In supporting the People's Front and the Spanish government, we strike a blow not only at the Spanish fascists and their masters, Hitler and Mussolini, but at our own fascist-minded reactionaries.

Rally to the support of the fight of the Spanish People's Front against reaction and fascism.

Give your full moral and financial support to the Spanish people.

Demand the withdrawal of the Nazi and Italian warships.

Demand that the German and Italian fascists keep their bloody hands off Spain.

Let all trade unionists and all progressive organizations send funds to help the Spanish people. Let us show in practice, through material aid, through demonstrations, through every form of support, that the American people are on the side of the People's Front, on the side of peace, on the side of order and progress, against fascist slavery and barbarism.

THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN WRITERS

WE CHARGE that the American press has, in the aggregate, presented an utterly false and misleading picture of the military revolt in Spain. We charge that it has been consistently unfair to the Spanish people and their elected government.

This distortion of the news has not been intentional in the majority of cases. There is one big newspaper chain that has tried to prove by screaming headlines and photographs with deliberately falsified captions that the Spanish government is a branch of the Red International and that the loyal militia consists entirely of sadists who spend their days in massacring captives and their nights in torturing priests and nuns. A few independent newspapers have followed the same lead. But the others have gone astray partly through ignorance and partly through the fact that news from Madrid comes through at the wrong hours, whereas the Fascist radio stations issue more sensational bulletins at more frequent intervals.

Day after day we read reports of "Red atrocities" issued as propaganda by sources friendly to the Fascists, and yet printed here as bona-fide news. Day after day we hear that Malaga, Valencia, or San Sebastian has fallen, that Madrid and Barcelona are in a state of anarchy and the government has fled. Day after day we learn that yesterday's headlines were merely Fascist lies. But tomorrow's will be no better.

Most newspapers—with the exception of the big chain mentioned above—are fairer on their editorial pages. But even there we get the totally false impression that this is a war between fascism and communism, between White and Red, in which both sides are equally to blame.

By this time the facts of the case ought to be known to the editorial room and the copy desk of every newspaper. They are, stated briefly:

1. That the present government was elected by a large majority of the Spanish people.

2. That the cabinet consisted and still consists of moderate republicans.

3. That the revolt was engineered by the more extreme members of the opposition parties—that is, by a minority of the minority.

4. That it is a revolt of army officers, supported by most but not all of the big manufacturers, the big landowners, and the upper clergy. It is being opposed by hundreds of thousands and probably millions of good Catholics, including priests and even bishops.

5. That it has found no widespread popular support except in Old Castile and Navarre, the most backward regions of Spain. Elsewhere the fascists and monarchists have had to fight their way from village to village, with as many enemies at the rear as on the front.

6. That the revolt would have collapsed during the first three weeks had it not been for airplanes from Italy and Germany that enabled Franco to ferry his foreign troops across the Strait of Gibraltar.

7. That he is now depending on Moors and the Foreign Legion — both famous for cruelty—to conquer his own countrymen.

These facts are practically beyond dispute, but there are others about which there is some uncertainty. Is it true that the revolt was plotted by German Nazi centers in Spain? Is it true that Mussolini agreed to help in return for naval bases in Morocco and the Balearic Islands (whereas Germany was to get the Canaries)? Documents published in England by the Manchester *Guardian* point in this direction, as does also the haste with which Germany and Italy sent airplanes and aviators to the Spanish Fascists. There is good reason to wonder whether the Nazi centers in this country would try to plunge us into a civil war if they thought that an American election had gone against their interests.

But confining ourselves to the proved facts about the Spanish revolt, there are three conclusions that have to be drawn. First, the responsibility for the bloodshed in Spain, and for the famine and pestilence that are likely to follow, lies squarely on the shoulders of the Spanish generals who plotted the revolt and the foreign intriguers who aided them. Second, the revolt demonstrates the light-hearted and light-headed fashion in which the fascists are likely to plunge this whole world into war. Third, the Spanish revolt is not a civil war between fascism and communism, but rather an attempt by reactionaries of all sorts—fascists, militarists, royalists, and ultra-royalists—to overthrow a democratic government elected and supported by the broad masses of the people. In such a conflict there is no question where the sympathies of the Americans ought to lie.

We charge that the American press, in this situation, has been misinforming and misleading the American people.

Fritz

NATHAN ASCH
M. J. BENARDETE
BRUCE BLIVEN
KENNETH BURKE
ROBERT CANTWELL
JOHN CHAMBERLAIN
ELEANOR CLARK
MALCOLM COWLEY
OTIS FERGUSON
WALDO FRANK
JOSEPH FREEMAN
MICHAEL GOLD
GRANVILLE HICKS
CORLISS LAMONT
MAX LERNER
JERRE MANGIONE
T. S. MATTHEWS
ISIDOR SCHNEIDER
HERMAN SIMPSON
GEORGE SOULE
HARVEY C. WEBSTER

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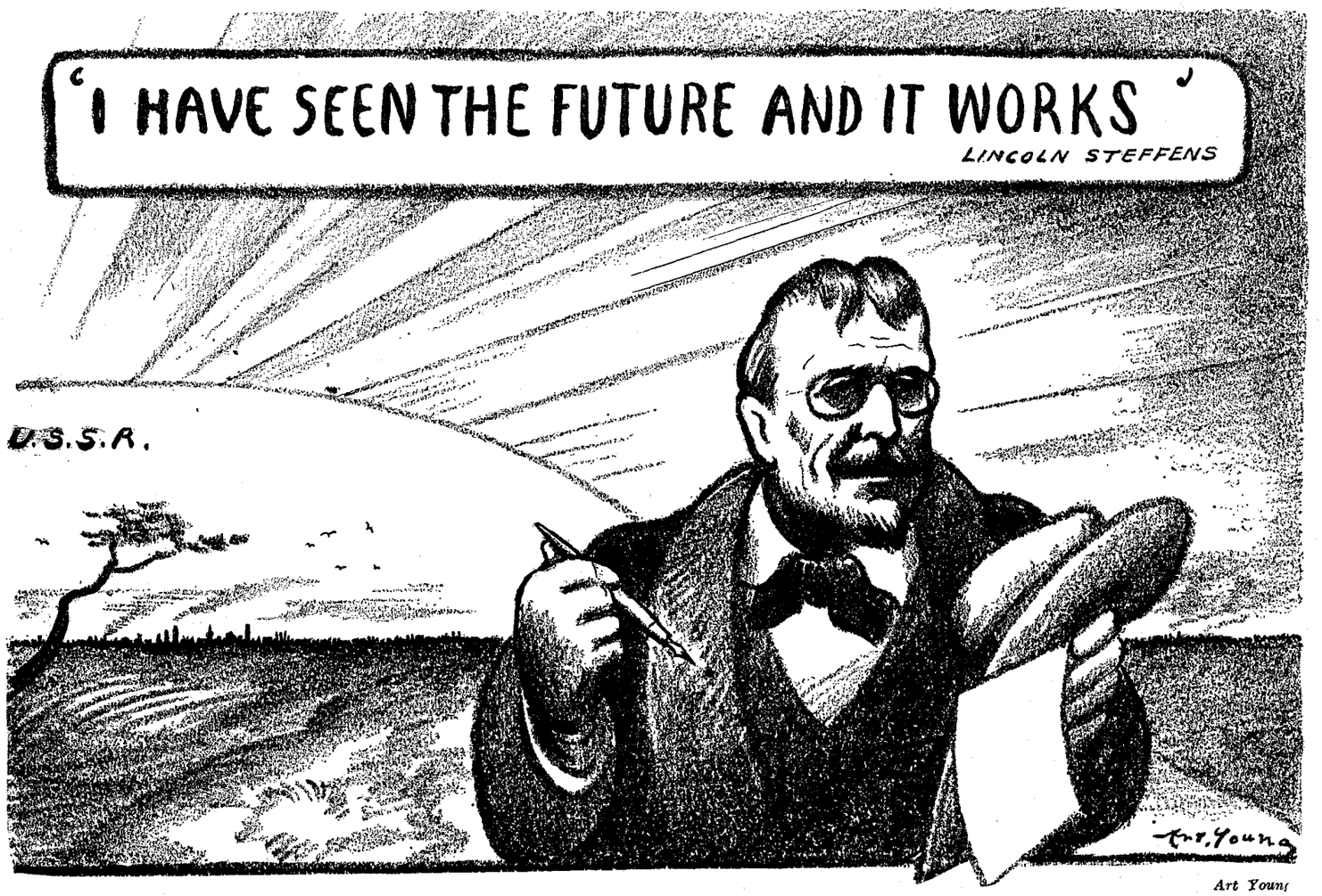
Lincoln Steffens

ELLA WINTER

IT was really a long slow process whereby Lincoln Steffens, reporter and what Karl Radek once called that "purely American phenomenon, an 'idealistic liberal,'" came to feel there was only one solution to the evils he had found troubling men in society. He was to have written the book of that odyssey himself; the "third volume," as we called it, was going to tell what happened to him after the end of his *Autobiography*. He would have told it with the vivid, humorous anecdotes he could tell so well, with the pen-pictures of the people who summed up for him and epitomized his thinking at any one stage, and he would have made them lovable and human even if others thought them "bad." It was literally true, what Mike Gold said in his review of the *Autobiography:* "Mr. Steffens liked everybody."

Now he won't write that third volume, but there's a book of his shorter pieces coming out soon, written since his return to America ten years ago, including the columns he used to write—and loved to write—for little local papers in Carmel. And these show, bit by bit, or rather in spurts, what was happening to him. It wasn't a continuous process, I think, unless you look at it from the "long view"; it came in fits and starts. One thing would make him see it clearly, and then another would make him assume there might be some other way—single tax, maybe, to which he was once devoted; or that employers would see that they must keep wages high to give themselves a market. It didn't come simply, by logical stages, this changing over from one view and one philosophy of society to another, especially to a man who had no particular taste for theory and who was wont to develop his ideas from the facts he saw rather than out of books. There's an Upton Sinclair anecdote that I always liked. Sinclair, who, as a Socialist, saw the whole system at work, reproached Steffens once in mid-career. Steffens was exposing city after city, state after state, business after business, and yet not really seeing his conclusions as a systematic whole. "Don't you see what you are seeing?" Sinclair cried at him impatiently. Years later, during his campaign for governorship of California, when Steffens thought Sinclair was following a trend that might lead him in an anti-socialist direction, he asked of Upton that same question. "Don't you see where your path is leading?"

If in his earlier and mid-career Steffens was the reporter, later he became the teacher. He thought you should refine into wisdom what your experience had taught you. And no sooner had he stumbled on what he thought was some new truth but he wanted to knead it into all his thinking, even if it meant he would have to change his conclusions radically. "You change your clothes," he would say, "why shouldn't you change your mind once in a while?" And he liked to hand on what he had learned, especially to young people. He judged young people's minds by whether they were fertile, open, scientific, could see and accept new views. He had always wanted to call his *Autobiography* "A Life of Unlearning"; he knew those of us who had been "educated" in schools and colleges had to unlearn a lot, as he had had to do. I, for instance, believed that the tenets of nineteenth-century liberalism were facts of our daily life; we weren't taught to look behind the scenes. I remember yet my incredulity in



Art Young

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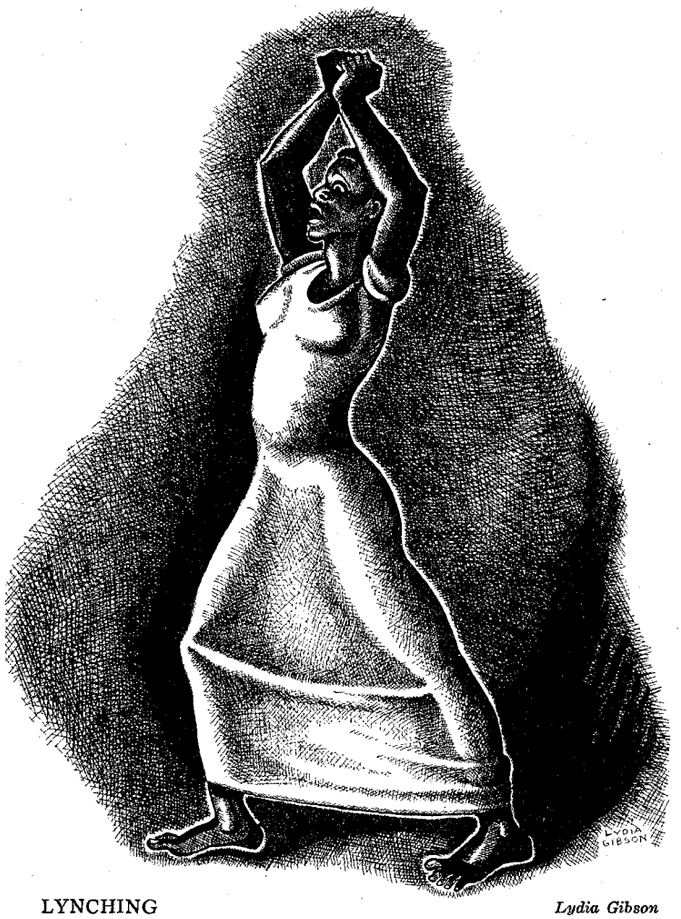
Italy, as we sat in our terraced garden, and Stef would tell me about police corruption, the way corporations usurped government functions, about franchises and privileges—always by means of stories and tales, by means of his own experiences. I couldn't believe it. And he would smile, and tell it again in the form of another story.

In 1917, the moment the Revolution happened, Steffens went to Russia, and again in 1919, and 1923. He was immediately struck by it. Here was something achieved that they said you couldn't attain, since you couldn't "change human nature"; here was a country that had at one sweep wiped out privilege—the dangled carrot that made all men grab. Back in Paris, he burst into the studio of his great friend, Jo Davidson, who was sculping Barney Baruch. "You've been to Russia?" Baruch asked. "Oh, no," said Stef, "I've been further than that. I've been 'way over into the Future—and it works!" That phrase of his was remembered and quoted. And he believed it more and more firmly as the years passed, and with increasing joy and hope for the rest of the world. As his old liberal friends, reformers and muckrakers who had at first welcomed the overthrow of the Czarist tyranny, fell away, repelled by this temporary curtailment of liberty in Russia or that seemingly harsh measure to maintain power until the job should be done, Steffens saw ever more clearly the building of the economic foundation of real liberty, the soil cleared for the infinite development of infinite human possibilities. "Don't they see that time is a dimension?" he would ask. He was obsessed by the fact that they couldn't get evolution into politics, as they had into science.

The birth of our son, Steffens's only child, made Stef seek and probe more keenly for any shoots he could find of the greater opportunities every man wants for his son: made him seek them in individuals, in schools, in society. There were two men I heard him say he'd like to give Pete to for a year: Jack Black, the highway robber, who ended his own life a few years ago, and J. B. McNamara—our J. B., who is still in Folsom. Steffens's search sharpened his analytical probing of human reactions under differing social conditions; more and more he felt conditions shaped human conduct and human nature. He told many of his observations now in the form of stories about his baby; he felt it his job to make his son at home in "the strange world to which I had invited him." But at the same time Steffens wanted to have the world a place of dignified and joyous living for "all the children of all the people." I was often reminded of Marx's aphorism that only after the revolution would history begin. . . . Steffens wanted to hurry history so that Pete could live a civilized life and not the barbarian makeshift we call life, where people have to *struggle* for food, shelter, clothing, health, learning, and the right not to be killed in war. He fought a "kindly clergyman's attempt to baptize Pete, and so start the process of mind-fixing and standardization," as he wrote in an article, "Radiant Fatherhood,"



LYNCHING *Lydia Gibson*

ordered by a New York magazine, which they found too unorthodox to print. (It will appear for the first time in his new book.) "Babies are born all right," says this article. "They don't know any of the bunk that makes us grown-ups make war and money, constitutions and best-sellers." And he was going to try and keep his son from believing the bunk.

A psychologist once wrote an article saying Pete was "only a myth" invented by his father to have "someone intelligent to talk to"—someone who could, so Charles Roberts Aldrich put it, "through Lincoln Steffens's words, present to the world the immortal needs and views of Youth."

Some people have called Steffens a cynic; this he never was. He cared far too deeply. His advice, even to newspapermen (his real love) was to hang around the bars if they wanted to, have the pose of not caring if they liked, but really to "care like hell," and to know all they could at least about something. To the last he loved to discuss with young newspapermen, whether from conservative or radical papers, the problems of their craft, and to give them the benefit of his experience, down to the smallest technical detail.

People have complained they didn't understand what Steffens meant. He wrote so much in paradox, with that little characteristic twist. "I do that," he said, "because if they understood what you were saying, they'd kill you." I didn't grasp the full significance of this until the terror after the San Francisco general strike, when they made every effort to break liberals and radicals alike through intimidation and threats. But those were the times when Stef would come right out and say openly and clearly what he thought. Only he would say it with wit, and grace, and courtesy, till even his enemies had to laugh with him; as when bosses and shipowners, at Steffens's request, contributed a dollar to buy a typewriter for Caroline Decker. They all admired his integrity, I think, maybe even envied it a little—his zest for new things and his utter independence.

Lincoln Steffens wanted to take his last trip to the Soviet Union. He wanted to see and tell his America what was going on there. "Why, communism would fit America like a cocked hat," he told a huge audience in one of his last lectures in Los Angeles. "Russia has had to struggle to produce the goods we have a-plenty and can't distribute. There'd be no such struggle here; we've solved production." With the winning of the world's battle to distribute the goods it has learned how to produce, Steffens thought we would enter a new era in which everyone could live and learn and play, and work at what he wanted to, with poise and gayety and humor; in which you could be poet or plumber—or newspaperman—with equal dignity; and so become, as he said he hoped for Pete, "a true prophet of the beautiful life to come on this earth, and perhaps—if he was good—the father of a girl baby."

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Duclos: Worker-Statesman

RAOUL DAMIENS

PARIS.

LIKE so many other men of our time whose political intelligence is balanced by a passionate love of mankind, Jacques Duclos came to Marxism by way of the Great Shambles. He belongs in this respect with Romain Rolland, Henri Barbusse, André Malraux, with tens of thousands of enlightened spirits, famous and obscure, throughout the world, whose eyes have been opened by the futile and bloody massacre of 1914-18 to the murderous fury of our decadent social order. Like the author of *Under Fire,* he lived through the stench and madness, the blood and terror of the wholesale butchery which the official ironists called the last of all wars. Like him and like the author of *Jean-Christophe,* he searched for ways of escape from a social system which had no longer the wit and authority expected of a village constable—to keep order. He looked for them first in a milk-and-water pacifism detached from economic and political realities. Only by slow growth and laborious inquiry did he stumble onto the dynamite heap, to the discovery that capitalist individualism in an age of machine production and potential plenty was an explosive mixture. Thence to the conclusion was but a step, and the conclusion was that we should have a peaceful world only when the industrial revolution was completed by the social one.

Jacques Duclos is only forty years old today. Like the great majority of proletarian leaders in Europe today he is a proletarian himself. Chairman of the Communist Party delegation in Parliament, head of the Party's propaganda department, vice-president of the Chamber of Deputies, author, journalist, editor, and one of the ornaments of French oratory, he could, had his party chosen to participate in the Blum government, have held one of the strategic posts in the present cabinet. Yet he has had nothing like a university education, or so much as the preliminaries of one; his formal schooling came to an abrupt termination before he was twelve years old. Left an orphan at that tender age, he had to abandon his books and earn his bread. He became a pastry cook's apprentice in his native hamlet of Louey, near the Spanish border. It was while working at this trade that the war overtook him. Conscripted when barely over eighteen, he took part in numerous battles, was wounded at Verdun, and after two years of fighting was taken prisoner during the Chemin des Dames offensive.

Bourgeois politicians and journalists who consider that public life should be the exclusive bailiwick of pedigreed nincompoops and who were scandalized at the Communists last spring for recruiting their candidates from the ranks of labor, would do well to look into the early history of Jacques Duclos, pastry baker and vice-president of the Chamber of Deputies. It might help them resolve one or two major mysteries: how it is, for instance, that even on the Right benches there is a respectful hush when Duclos rises to speak, or again why the veteran Caillaux, after hearing Thorez speak, remarked: "When that young miner becomes premier of France I shall go and ask him for an under-secretaryship."

The reason a bricklayer and a waiter can go straight from their scaffoldings and their pantries to parliament and not feel the least bit out of place is simply this, that the Communist Party is no mere one-day-in-the-year electioneering machine. Before a Communist worker becomes a candidate for office he has gone through a course of training—in his trade union, in his unit, his section, with its hundred and one committees—and by the time he has come through the mill he has, for the practical business of representing a constituency, received something that need not fear comparison with a college training. He has learned the mechanism of political organization, collective discipline, the needs and aspirations of the men and women of his community—and why, under the existing scheme of things, they so rarely get fulfilled. It is a tough but efficient school, and those who graduate from it bring away wisdom and experience which the average lawyer put up by the parties of the Right does not often find in his books. Not that the Communists neglect or underestimate learning. The proletarian parties have always laid the greatest emphasis on the intellectual cultivation of the workers; and their militants who rise to leadership are invariably men who have got a thorough grounding in history and political economy, in the art of lucid expression in the written and spoken word, and in pure literature too.

Serrano

Duclos's case is only typical. Having had few opportunities in boyhood, he stretched to the utmost those that came his way afterwards. Even a German military prison had its silver lining; he mastered the language of his captors, with the consequence that today he is perhaps the leading authority in France on the Hitler dictatorship. And he read—books, pamphlets, newspapers, whatever fell into his hands. One of these was a story of life at the front, which was destined to open unsuspected horizons to him and to alter the course of his life. It was called *Under Fire.* He had hitherto credited the official version of the war as a cataclysm of nature; Barbusse's masterpiece taught him better. Back home after the armistice he sought out the author, and until the latter's death the two ex-soldiers were the closest friends and co-workers. Duclos joined Barbusse's left-wing veterans' organization, the A.R.A.C. In rapid succession he became the managing editor of its publication, a member of its executive committee, and finally its vice-president. Subsequently the two men collaborated in founding the Amsterdam-Pleyel anti-war league.

It was in the A.R.A.C. that Duclos met Paul Vaillant-Couturier. From this e counter grew another lifelong comradesh and for Duclos a further advance in political education. When the French Cc munist Party was founded in 1920, both them were enrolled among its first memb

"Come to the office of the Commu delegation at the Chamber," Duclos had ... when we had settled the hour of our appointment. But the little room which had been assigned in 1932 to a group of eleven Communist deputies had become somewhat cramped quarters for a delegation of seventy-two. A typist was pounding away in the adjoining office while a dozen members were trying, at four desks, to prepare the evening session. It did not look promising as a scene for quiet conversation. Duclos seemed to have reached the same conclusion. "We'll go over to the vice-presidency," he said, taking me by the arm, "and give these disturbers the slip."

"Comrade," I began, when we were alone, "I have read your articles in *l'Humanité,* on what you call the *French Front.* I am not quite sure that I follow the new party line As soon as the elections were over, the *Hun* began to run the slogan 'Onward to t union of the French nation!' In cert quarters it was whispered that the Cc

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munists were not playing the game, that they were pulling the blanket over themselves and trying to uncover their bedmates. Now today, on my way over here, I read in *La Flèche,* a supposedly Left paper, a violent attack on yourself and on the Communist Party. You're accused of throwing over the Front Populaire and in your desire to defend the Soviet Union, you are said to be sacrificing the interests of the French workers and making common cause with the moderate parties and even the trusts. Do tell me what you mean by the French Front."

"La Flèche," Duclos replied, "is not a Left paper despite its pretensions, and Bergery and Izard who run it have crawled into the Front Populaire by a back door. In the present state of things in France, the acid test of sincerity is the old radical slogan 'no enemies on the Left.' Bergery is eternally having bones to pick not only with us but with Herriot and with the Radical Socialist press. It's a threadbare tactic. Don't let's waste any words on it.

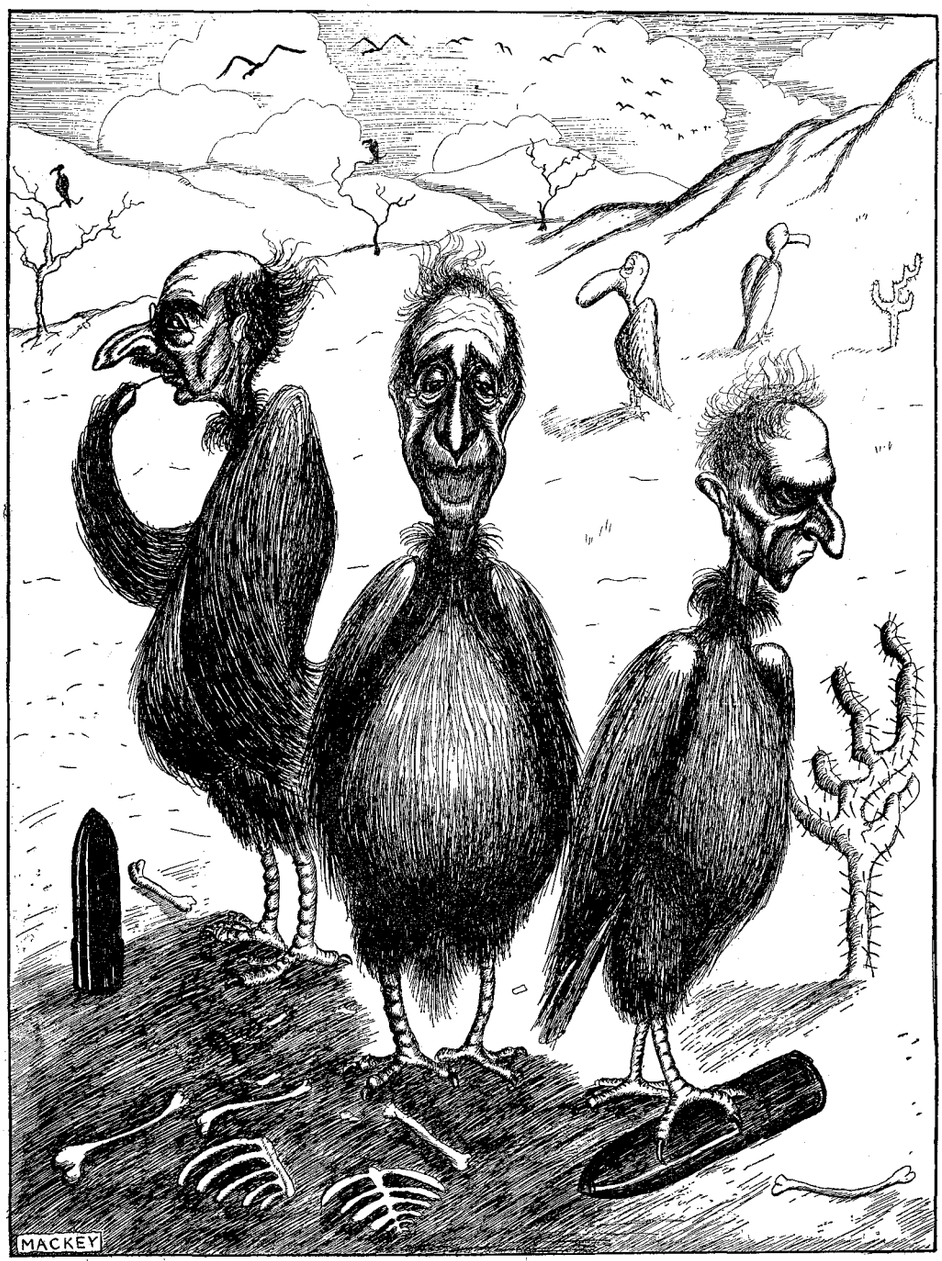
"I come now to the Front Français," Duclos went on. "The Communist Party is determined to avert the horror and humiliation of fascism in France. It was to this end that after the attempted coup of February 6, 1934, we proposed to our Socialist comrades unity of action, and it was with the same purpose in view we initiated the Front Populaire movement which included the Radical Socialists, the Socialist Union, and scores of non-political organizations. The electoral triumph of April 26 and May 3 showed that the French people wanted fascism no more than we do. But there is no reason for resting on our laurels. We had never meant to be content with a victory at the polls. We make no secret of our solidarity with the U.S.S.R., nor of our desire to defend the *patrie* of the workers against Hitler and the fascists. But Hitler menaces our country too.

"The reactionaries who still maneuver to get this country to break its mutual-assistance pact with the Soviet Union because Moscow and Paris have different ideologies, are blindly or wittingly playing into the hands of their country's foes. Their conduct is either stupidity or treason. In situations involving life and death, nations are not going to be kept from mutual defense by irrelevant questions of creed or regime. Today Adolf Hitler and Mussolini are menacing French security by attempting to instal their creatures in Spain. Our fascists, crazed by partisan passion, abet them in their assault on the Spanish republic, forgetting that the Frente Popular is friendly to France, while the criminal generals, Franco and Mola, are in the pay of our enemies."

Duclos's face was grave as he continued: "We will not permit the liberties of Spain be drowned in blood, not only because Spanish republicans share our ideals but ause their victory is our victory, their eat is our defeat. In defending the liberty of Spain we are defending our own liberty. The vast majority of the French people agree with us. Not only those who voted for the Front Populaire, but the majority of those who did not. The reckless folly of our fascists has made the issue crystal clear. Thousands upon thousands of men and women of good will who love their country and want to preserve its independence—people who do not share our opinion on international policy at all—have been so repelled by the treacherous behavior of Hitler's agents in France that they turn Left not from motives of social reform but because they regard the Front Populaire as the rallying ground of patriotism. I think we should welcome these people. We should broaden the framework of the Front Populaire. Whoever has a horror of fascism belongs to the Front Populaire camp. We said to the radicals a year ago and to the Socialists two years ago: Diversity of opinion, unity of action. We say it now to the moderates and to the people of no party. Whether or not you agree with us about the Bank of France and the forty-hour week, as long as you are against the fascist traitors who work with the enemies of France, you belong with us. That is what we mean by the French Front."

"How is France responding to this invitation?" I asked.

"The best answer I can give you," Duclos replied, "is by telling you that the Commu-



Mackey

UNNATURAL HISTORY—III

Three choice specimens of *Dupontus denemourus,* a bird of prey similar to the condor and vulture. In respect to its feeding habits, it undergoes a kind of alternation of generations, in peace-time living on cellophane and duco, while in war-time seeming to relish guncotton and the bodies of dead men. Makes special migrations to the Balkans and the Far East. The above three specimens, *Irenée, Pierre,* and *Lammot,* were sketched from life in the great aviary at Wilmington, Del.—JOHN MACKEY.

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nist Party is now in point of enrolled membership the largest party in France. If we include 80,000 youth we now number 315,000. We are growing at the rate of 5,000 a month. That's the French people's answer to fascist treason. But it is not we alone who are gaining. All the Front Populaire parties, including the Radicals, have made vast strides since May and particularly since the latest fascist demonstration beyond the Pyrenees. Were there to be a general election tomorrow, the Communists would probably get two million votes and the Socialists two and a half million. That's the most heartening thing in an otherwise gloomy outlook: the thunderous march of the mass movement. As Thorez predicted when you interviewed him some time ago, the first Congress of the Front Populaire Committees has now been held in the Paris district. The people are not relaxing their vigilance."

"The masses," I said, "are keeping up their end, certainly. I am less sure of the government. I shall let discretion go hang and tell you that I am frankly disillusioned and disturbed by its behavior, in the Spanish situation particularly. What is your opinion?"

"We are not mincing words in our press. Read Vaillant-Couturier's editorial in *l'Humanité* today. Here's a straightforward enough paragraph:

> Let a storm of popular indignation impose its demand that the constitutional government of Spain be treated as such, and that normal commercial relations with it enable it to restore order.

"Our government," Duclos went on, "has not shown all the energy we might have expected of it in the present crisis as well as in some previous ones. The treasonable press should have been suppressed as soon as it began to bark. It gave ample incentive for drastic action."

"On the whole, I take it, the party is not displeased with the cabinet's record," I said.

"On the whole it has done remarkably well," Duclos replied. "It has passed a large number of laws. Some of them are actually executed."

He laughed heartily. *"Allez,* enough questions. Remember the slogan: Everything for the Front Populaire; everything through the Front Populaire."

The Equilibrists and Mr. Keynes–II

EDWARD MOUNT

At the end of his book Keynes has some notes on the social philosophy toward which his theory might lead. Although this section is written with qualifications, it can perhaps be expressed thus: The two major evils of modern capitalism are unemployment and the grossly unfair distribution of wealth and income. These can both, thinks Keynes, be solved by state control of investment and a policy of reducing the rate of interest to zero. The latter measure might within a generation cause such a multiplication of capital instruments that a high standard of living for all would result. Profits would remain and some people could make fortunes; but, presumably because interest did not exist, they would not, asserts Keynes, be able to make them grow. In his phrase, the euthanasia of the rentier class would occur. With the disappearance of the rentier class—of those who live on fixed interest-bearing securities without fulfilling any economic function—would go much of the present inequality. True, financiers and entrepreneurs who so love their jobs that they would work for much less than they now get, would be harnessed to the state to oversee the details and conditions of investment. Further, the economic causes of war would be removed—the perfectly necessary struggle for markets, which, in Keynes's view, proceeds from *laissez-faire* plus a gold standard. Other measures of "state socialism" are neither necessary nor desirable, says Keynes, for the partial reforms which he recommends would in effect make the world a place where the classical analysis of competition and its benefits would apply. And since, following orthodox analysis, he believes that, except for unemployment, both pure and monopolistic competition allocate resources in the "best" way, he conceives of his reforms as making workable a competitive system with its attendant virtues, "freedom," "individualism," and "efficiency." Without these reforms its evils are so intolerable that it will disappear altogether.

To certain readers a good part of the above is palpable nonsense; but that a man like Keynes, who keeps his fingers in a number of pies besides the academic, can write it, is indication enough that some people will believe it. But how simple, on Keynes's analysis, can the reform be which is to bring this Utopia? Unfortunately Keynes gives no clue as to what he means by "socialization of investment" beyond saying that it can be carried out gradually, that it can include compromises of all sorts "by which public authority will coöperate with private initiative," and that "It is not the ownership of the instruments of production which it is important for the state to assume. If the state is able to determine the aggregate amount of resources devoted to augmenting the instruments and the basic rate of reward to those who own them, it will have accomplished all that is necessary [p. 378]." "Coöperate" indeed! "Ownership not important" indeed! And "if"!

What is necessary in order to determine the amount of resources which shall be devoted to producing instruments of production? First, a supervisory body with power to take "resources" and put them where it wants them. The "resources" Keynes means are labor, equipment, and natural resources. You "take" them by giving one firm "money" to buy them with, or, if it has the money, by seeing that it buys what you want it to buy and in

"Please, boys, this 'folded-arms' thing is driving me nuts." *Ajay*

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the amount you want it to buy. If it hasn't the money, you take it from another firm which has. But from which one? From a profitable one? Or from one which is declining and has no profits but which, you think, ought to decline more quickly? Someone may object that this individual treatment is not necessary—the state will control the sales receipts in whole or in part and determine what new investment is to be. But since wage and capital expenditures vary from firm to firm, the same range of decisions must be made—no flat percentage is possible. Control of this sort must cope with prices and wages. If the state has forced investment in one direction so that goods cannot be sold at profitable prices, it still cannot allow prices to be raised if this would result in unused capacity and unemployment. It must make up the difference from somewhere else and take a hand in the price policy. Nor can it fail to take into account—and supervise—the wages as between firms and industries. Nor is this all. The specific things in which an entrepreneur invests must be supervised. Is it not plain that when the state allocates the funds, it largely determines who shall and who shall not make profits? It would mean saying which firms are to come into and which are to go out of existence, which ones are to grow and which to decline, and at what rates. This, with several hundred thousand corporations, is not a job of the same order as changing the discount rate or buying or selling government bonds or any of the other monetary controls Keynes formerly talked about.

Taken as a group, bourgeois economists have already recommended that the state take over the whole economy—one says, "Take over this part"; another, "More control is needed here"; there is almost no part where one or another has not concluded that the evils call for state control. Nevertheless, each is convinced that the "system as a whole" can and should be retained. But what else, as long as they remain bourgeois economists, can they suggest when they discover certain things which need to be changed? By definition, a bourgeois economist can never advocate the abolition of capitalism, but only certain changes in it. It is curious that none of them seems to ask himself what kind of state it is upon which he relies for the reforms which will make everything all right.

How is it that considering the nature of the state under capitalism, Keynes can talk so glibly about the "euthanasia" of the rentiers? He must know that since many rentiers can read they would surely learn of the plan to put them to death. He does not actually think they would help him? No, he presumably thinks the state must do it, against the will of protesting, but law-abiding, rentiers. Now even though Keynes is a liberal, he might ask himself whether any state has n recent industrial times accomplished a like sk and how it was done. Germany? Italy? ren an economist can see that fascism is italism in a more hideous guise. The

Rappe

"Yer Honor, this Red louse was tryin' to agitate these bums into thinkin' they was hungry."

U.S.S.R.? Yes, there a greater task was accomplished, but not by euthanasia. Aside from this example, which implicitly Keynes writes against, there is no case of a state seriously attempting and carrying through undertakings of the kind Keynes hopes for. In fact, everyone's impression of the state is that it does other things, does not carry through such serious reforms as the elimination of a rentier class—even when through unemployment the capitalist system itself is threatened.

Why? Is not the reason that to ask the state to do away with the rentiers is to ask the capitalists to do away with themselves? Who are the rentiers? Are they not the people who sit on the boards of our corporations, our banks, our newspapers? They own and direct most of the country. If the political leaders are rentiers or are closely connected with rentiers, if the party contributors are rentiers, and the prominent Democrats and Republicans in each district are small rentiers and capitalists, it is clear that a cynical view of what the state is likely to do about rentiers is the honest view. The state can be counted on to kill off the rentiers in the same way as it has "killed off" the monopolies and trusts. In the United States we know that in the forty years during which the state has been acting against trusts and monopolies, they have multiplied, and monopolization and concentration have pressed on.

Keynes ends on the note that ideas are more powerful than vested interests, and he points out that even the madmen in authority are distilling their frenzy from the academic scribblers of a few years back. The first part of this argument deserves no attention. It is in character that a man who gives no thought to the problem of how great social changes come about should make a statement with such confidence. It seems contradictory, though, that a person with an idealist theory of history should find solace in the fact that madmen in authority are inspired by academic writers. When a Mussolini in power orders, as he did, the construction of a "Fascist theory," much as he would order a new uniform, it is small credit to the academic writers or the idealist philosophy of history. Hitler's use of the scribblers to construct a platform he never intended to carry out, is surely a better example of the *use* of confusing ideas by vested interests than of the *power* of ideas over vested interests. The regrettable conclusion is inevitable that Keynes's association with cabinet ministers and other gentlemen who have "made history" has given a bias both to his theory of history and to his theory of the state —let alone his views on the capitalist system.

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Willie Gallacher, M. P.

JOHN DRELLAN

THE train pulls in with an effort; there is a stir among the crowd. Everyone is eager for his first glance of "Willie" Gallacher, only British Communist M.P. In a minute or two everyone will learn why he is always called Willie, never William, even in the press.

There is a shout. He is coming out of the car and people recognize him from his picture. Later, he will tell an uproarious anecdote of how he was met in various English towns after his trial in 1919. But now everyone surrounds him and the platform is a babel of Communists and workers, and also hangers-on, curiosity seekers, and "respectable" people who have come to look.

Reporters fire questions at him. What about the situation in England? The capitalists will sell out the royal family to save their necks if they have to, he says, but first what about a spot of tea for breakfast? With Jim Litterick, Communist M.L.A. of Manitoba, other members of the Party, reporters, and photographers, Willie goes to Jack's Café for his spot of tea.

The photographers ask him to pose. "Sure," he says, and while he poses, he passes around a picture of his wife and children. "You've heard of the dictatorship of the proletariat? Well," he points to his wife, "that's the dictatorship. I'm the proletariat." Everyone laughs, reporters included. They sit down to break bread with this Scotch Communist. It's not easy to leave this warmth. It does the soul good to bask in the volatile good-humor of Willie, so the reporters of the capitalist press sit down.

He is not a big man, although his reputation has led people to expect a giant. Five feet seven and a stocky, tightly knit figure, that's Gallacher. His face is forever beaming. It's round and chubby and red. His forehead slopes back gradually into a high bald pate that comes to a ridge and drops shortly down into his solid neck. His chin is pointed and his eyes are the small piercing eyes of the shrewd Scot. They take in a dozen things at once.

And, man, how alive is this "stormy petrel of Parliament," which is what they call him overseas. When he says something, he says it with his whole body. His gestures sweep the speaking platform. When he drives home a point, he bends at the knees, clenches his fists, and rises to his climax like a rocket; and the audience catapults upward with him. One minute his bitterness, his hatred of the shams, the corruptness of capitalism has him tightly bound in a knot which opens into eloquence with tensed entrails.

"I have told the government in Parliament," he says, "that if they had the slightest trace of decency they would remove the Cenotaph from Whitehall. It is a mockery of the living and a still greater mockery of the dead. . . ."

The next minute, after the hush has sunk into the depths of those assembled, he has them out of their seats with laughter, imitating Sir Walter Runciman's sheepish smile in answer to his, Willie's, accusations of fraud in the shipping business after the war and now. "Baa, baa, baa," he mimics, making sheep's eyes and rocking his head foolishly from side to side. The roar of laughter is more than that. It is a release from the pounding of the blood, from the thrilling and contagious vitality that pours down from the stage. The audience would rise as one to immediate action if the call came.

He loves a show, this Willie Gallacher. At a social given for him by the Party here, he opens his remarks very solemnly. "A reporter from your *Try-bune* came to me today and said that the people of Winnipeg (the *best people* I suppose) were astounded . . . astounded!" Roundly he mouths the quoted words. "They were astounded to find me such a soft-spoken, well-educated *gentleman!*"

Oh, there is fun in this tireless fighter, who stands for no nonsense in Parliament. As a contrast to the above anecdote, he tells of an incident in England after his trial. Three policemen, six-footers, testified to his ferocity, how he tore and fought and butted. After his imprisonment, he went on a speaking tour. At one small town a considerable turnout was there to meet him.

As he speaks, he imitates (he is an actor) the crowd, craning necks and looking past him for some Cardiff giant. He dismounts from the train, approaches one of the crowd.

"Maybe you're looking for me?" he says, turning and imitating the ogler looking down at him from a great height. "You? Naw! Don't bother, will ya?"

"But it's Willie Gallacher y'want noo?"

"Aye, leave off, I sez."

In a timid voice, looking up on tiptoe: "But I'm Willie Gallacher." In astonishment: "Wot, not *the* Gallacher?" "Aye, *the* Gallacher."

Then, still in mimicry, the speaker turns to the crowd, points a finger, overcomes his speechlessness and says, "Look—him."

In a way, he is a giant, a fighting giant with a mind that is wise and trigger-fast. But there is more sting (and fun) in one bit of this man's lovable acting than in a month of intellectualizing. He is the British Will Rogers, and a fighting, pugnacious Communist, whom the "best people are astounded to find a soft-spoken, well-educated *gentleman*"—who looks more like a Presbyterian minister, says the surprised press, than like a Communist. And this is the man whom the American government refused to admit solely for the purpose of visiting his sisters in Chicago. He hadn't seen them for twenty-two years. A man whom Will Rogers would have welcomed as a brother, in spite of differences in political faith.

We approached him to ask about this American business. When you speak to him, you put your arm on his shoulder.

"The American consul?" he says in his rich brogue. "Well, y'know how those things are. Section blickty, sub-section tahoot—they spring up overnicht." And his eyes twinkle merrily.

"I hear Landon thinks public golf courses are communistic." *Kruckman*

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"Don't Tread On Me!"

DANIEL MURDOCK

LAST spring when the cherry trees in Washington began to bloom for the rotogravure sections, a temporary citizen of the Capital, Harry Hopkins, released his own harbinger of the season. His announcement was curt and to the point: Between March and June 42,000 New York W.P.A. workers were to be skidded from their relief jobs onto the streets. Among the workers due for dismissal, it was stated, were 8,400 from the ranks of white-collar groups: typists, file clerks, researchers, and the like.

Came June, and men of their words that hey are, Hopkins and his New York administrator, Victor Ridder, had used the dismissal ax on 42,000 relief employees. But a queer thing had happened: nearly all the 8,400 white-collar and professional people slated to go had not gone, were still on the job. The wholesale firing had been at the expense of manual workers. Don't jump to the deduction that the Lord and the Roosevelt Relief Administration have a passion for workers in white collars to the exclusion of those in (faded) blue. The real answer is simple: the white-collar relief workers, when they heard of the proposed layoffs, put up a stubborn, highly organized fight for their jobs. That fight was waged by and through the New York City Projects Council, a one-year-old organization of white-collar and professional employees on government projects. The intense, prolonged campaign that kept jobs for 8,400 wearers of the white collar is the Council's major victory up until now—but there'll be other victories and other councils.

Back in C.W.A. days there was a white-collar relief-workers' organization in New York that staggered along under the name Associated Office & Professional Emergency Employees. Despite the burdensome title, the A.O.P.E.E. made sure-footed progress in organizing stenographers, office boys, teachers, file clerks on the projects. As the different groups expanded, however, some of them split off to form independent organizations. This decentralization was as it should be, but it was rough on the parent organization, and in July 1935 the A.O.P.E.E. found itself with a bare handful of active members.

Despite the abbreviated membership rolls, the A.O.P.E.E. began a midsummer campaign for vacations with pay for white-collar relief workers. Launched as a routine notion, the idea of vacations found an amazing response from projects. Workers who had previously been stone deaf to suggestions of collective action to protect their jobs and conditions sent delegates on the run to A.O.P.E.E. headquarters to find out how they could help secure vacations. The small organization was swamped with hundreds of new members almost overnight. So it proposed, and briskly carried through, a merger of several independent unions of white-collar relief workers, such as the Recreational Leaders' Association, Housing Employees' Association, and others. The new outfit christened itself City Projects Council, set up headquarters at 139 West Twenty-second Street. For a banner and emblem the delegates went back to American Revolutionary War history and chose that wide-awake serpent rampant, and beneath it the immortal, firm request "Don't Tread on Me!" Then the General came, and the fun began.

It may have been coincidence, but as soon as General Hugh S. Johnson took up his post as W.P.A. administrator for New York City several little items such as getting paid on time went haywire. That's a pretty serious matter to a white-collar relief worker, because bank accounts to fall back on for eating and rent are as scarce as salary raises for Kansas schoolteachers under Landon. Not only did all W.P.A. workers want to be paid practically on time, but the A.F. of L. building-trades workers stubbornly insisted on working only for prevailing wage rates. (They won the argument.) The General implored patience. In answer to non-payment of wages for three weeks and a threatened pay cut, the City Projects Council called a stoppage for August 21.

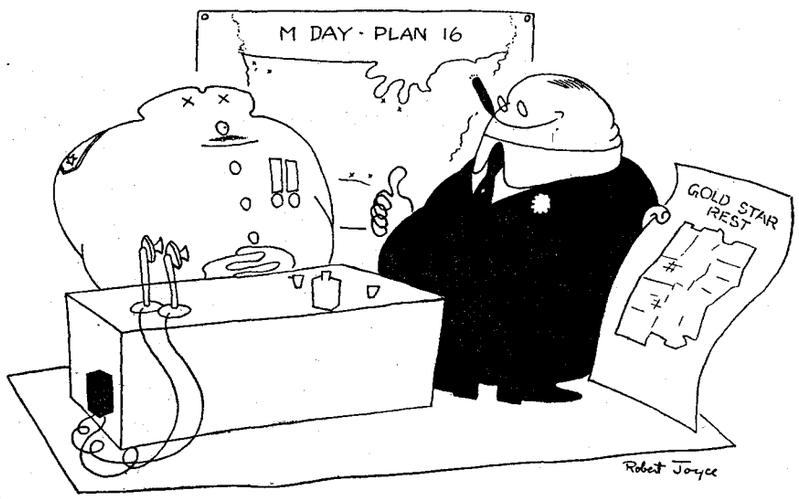
General Hugh, to save his face, began to roar. Administrative staff members, he shouted, had taken an oath of loyalty to the government, and quitting work was an act of treason. It was an accusation that was to be repeated many times in the next year. At first the white collars expanded with laughter; now the allegation merely bores them. The Administrator, getting warmed up, wanted to make a Red-baiting speech, which he did before an assembly of 5,000 administrative employees. They listened to him in polite silence, on government time.

The strike baffled the General. He offered a $13 immediate bonus to halt suffering among unpaid W.P.A. employees, agreed to meet with a delegation each week to discuss grievances, and granted to all but the $71.50 classification the maximum rates of pay possible under the Roosevelt schedule. Thousands of white-collar workers discovered that organized action offered protection, and the City Projects Council membership roll grew a few yards longer.

Roaring, shouts of "Reds!", and speeches didn't seem to stop several hundred new workers joining the Council each week. The General tried being canny. He gave Willis Morgan, president of the body, a job on the newly created Labor Advisory Board for W.P.A. workers. The General rubbed his hands—and asked Morgan to call off strikes and stoppages. Morgan gasped, resigned, and told the newspapers about the General's curious, but understandable, request. The story made good copy, and a few hundred more project workers joined the Council.

The General didn't learn. Instead of wading into the problem of gross inefficiency in his own administrative office, he spent extra hours shouting "You can't strike against the government!" Coolidge had a copyright on this theme song, but Hugh had plugged it ever since the San Francisco general strike. The General was thoroughly tangled in the flypaper of Red baiting. Reluctantly, no doubt, Harry Hopkins gave him the gong.

The City Projects Council hadn't been after the General's scalp. They were merely going their own peaceful way, defending their jobs, their wage scales, their right to organize. A lot of the members, to their sincere astonishment, got arrested, of course, slugged by the cops, taken for rides in patrol



"Why not stock up with cemeteries while the prices are low?" *Joyce*

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wagons. But that sort of near-sensationalism (to capitalist newspapers) doesn't give a fair picture of the work of the Council. An arrest is an unwelcome rarity. Ninety-eight percent of the kilowatt hours of energy goes into routine, dull organizational work, designed to get James Jones his job back, Susan Wilkins assigned to her proper wage classification, even if she is a Negro. But on with the saga of the defensive wars of the City Projects Council——

The Administrator was gone, long live the Administrator! The new head of W.P.A. in New York City was Victor Ridder, publisher of Wall Street's *Journal of Commerce*, the *Staats-Zeitung,* and a couple of papers in the Middle West. His entrance was destined to be as smooth as the patter of one of his advertising salesmen. Ridder was barely on the job before the deposed General, possibly in a fit of pique, told the press that Victor had been appointed Administrator by mistake; Washington, he said, had really had in mind his brother, Bernard, who had been a big shot in the N.R.A., while Victor had been a somewhat lesser shot in New York's Temporary Emergency Relief Administration, set up at the time of Roosevelt's inaugural. Amidst laughter, therefore, Victor Ridder sat down to his desk. Victor had apparently been told to go easy, especially on those well-organized white-collar reliefers. He acted like a woolly white lamb with a blue ribbon around his neck.

"I am a gentle soul," he actually declared, "and do things with a smile."

The 10,000 members of City Projects Council read this peaceful testament, and reserved judgment.

October 1935 began with Mr. Ridder telling a delegation of the Council that he was going to be so scrupulously fair in dealing with workers that unions would no longer be necessary. Very smooth, and not exactly original, thought the hardened young white-collar veterans. They went on with such activities as putting up a fight to get a wage increase for 7000 $71.50-a-month office workers (they got it—$85—in April 1936). The Council didn't stop insisting that needy writers couldn't get relief jobs. You know, just kept making a nuisance of themselves. Delegations, picket lines, sit-down demonstrations in the Administrator's office by applicants for jobs, and all that stuff, what? They not only stopped lay-offs but increased the number of white-collar jobs to 60,000.

The Council also made the mistake of keeping on growing. Was that a proper way to respond to the overtures of a smooth W.P.A. administrator?

Victor geared himself up in January 1936 and announced that 20,000 people would soon be be laid off W.P.A. projects. The City Projects Council thought that one over a while and called a demonstration for January 11. On that date 4,000 white-collar relief employees gathered around the "Don't Tread on Me!" banner. It was the largest demonstration of white-collar workers ever held in New York. P.S.—Nobody was fired from relief projects.

The gentle Victor didn't like demonstrations even as well as had his predecessor, the doughty General (who had seen men en masse previously). Instead of hollering "Reds!" he screamed "Red Rats!" He tried the stale stunt of encouraging company unions on the projects, such as the Federal Theater Veterans League. This tactic landed him quite a distance short of first base. As the ranks of white-collar workers under the leadership of City Projects Council marched on steadily, Publisher Ridder worked himself toward hysteria. "Vermin!" he yelled. "When I wake up in the morning the first thing I say is 'To hell with the City Projects Council.'" The erstwhile gentle lamb couldn't take organization; as summer of 1936 ground on, he tried to roar like a General. And so another administrative performer bit the dust in August. Washington went back to the Army for a successor to Ridder, and found him in the person of Lt.-Col. Brehon Somervell.

The Colonel made a fast-talking entrance, but stuck a smartly shod foot in it a few days later by threatening to close out the musicians' project if the members struck to support their demand for no increase in number of weekly rehearsals and performances for the same pay. This was answered by the state A.F. of L. convention, which protested his attack on the right to strike.

Solid and striking as the Council's achievments are, however, they stand pretty mu alone. White-collar and professional wor ers in Philadelphia, Chicago, Los Angel and other cities very often don't get Ne York wage rates. When New York's Council comes through a campaign with the "Don't Tread on Me!" banner still aloft, they think workers in other cities should also enjoy some fruits of the victory. So they're calling a national convention of workers on white-collar and professional projects for October 10, 11, and 12, to be held in Cleveland. They want all white-collar relief workers' organizations, known and unknown, to be there. And they want representatives from unorganized areas who want to start organizing. The serpent banner will be there, frayed (as are some of the white collars), and bearing some mudstains and imprints of cop heels. In the convention hall there'll be relief workers from all over the nation to listen to and add to the story of City Projects Council—a quiet, firm answer to the accusation that "white collars won't ever organize."

Chant in Praise of the Land

It is no soft land, Te Puka Maruia:
the storm-plowed ground is pebbled underfoot;
the thin earth yields but little, the reef bristles.
and hunger does not wait for calm at sea.
Yet, sleeping upon the mat, on the coral floor,
or under the star-pierced fronds of the hakari,
we are happier than in the tall hives of our people.
The wooden pillow is softer than a banker's heart
and it is better to play tag with death at sea
than to die slowly at a desk or a machine—
better, with spear in hand, to walk on the reef barefooted
than to wear out our days enriching an exploiter.
Here is the last refuge of freedom; let us remain
while it still lingers, for the world outside
totters to ruin. Here at Te Puka Maruia there is peace.

CLIFFORD GESSLER.

Call It Your World

Call it your world,
Acclaim your strength in it,
And let the cynics
Say what they must.

Call it your world,
You have its sons to breed,
Its earth to garden. You
Will be its dust.

Call it your world,
It cannot be disowned
Save by the dreaming
Or the terrified.

Have done with dreaming
And have done with terror.
Call it your world,
And make it fit your pride.

MARIE DE L. WELCH.

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Our Readers' Forum

A Contribution for Spain

Enclosed you will find a check for $20.50, which represents the contribution of the members of the Great Lakes Symphony Orchestra in the city of Cleveland to the Chest for the Spanish People. This is their way of showing their sympathy with the Spanish people in the fight against fascism.

A MUSICIAN.

[Other readers who wish to contribute to the defense of Spanish democracy are urged to send funds to the United Committee for Struggle Against Spanish Fascism, 21 East 17th Street, New York City.]

A Chain-Letter Campaign

If the chain-letter may be used as a tool of Hitlism and anti-Semitism, why should it not also an effective instrument in mobilizing and crysllizing public sentiment against the enemies of the ople?

I have just sent off ten letters to acquaintances—ostly people living in small towns in upper New York, who would tremble at the word "Red"—in which I pointed out the despotic implications of Landon's speeches and of his past career, and showed what reactionary elements are backing him. Having urged the support of independent labor candidates everywhere, I stressed the importance of defeating the Landon-Hearst-Liberty League gang. My letters followed a common pattern, with individual adaptations. It took me only about five hours to write them. I concluded, of course, with the suggestion that my correspondent send ten more letters.

Perhaps my suggestion may sound good to other readers of the NEW MASSES. Nothing takes the place of personal contact, of course, but the letter is far more personal in its appeal than the printed editorial; and the very act of copying such a letter several times, with the next link in mind, is a kind of political education. The cost is slight, since it involves nothing but postage. I should like to see our country covered by heartfelt, one-page political letters, a real democratic exchange of opinion. The speed with which such letters would multiply, if given a good start, is a mathematical marvel. A thousand beginners of chains could produce at the fifth remove, assuming only a 50-percent response along the line, no less than *six million*. Enough, I think, to exert heavy pressure on any government.

It behooves us, in this time of crisis and growing strikes, to miss no opportunity to present our way of looking at things to the widest possible sections of the electorate.

PAUL HAINES.

From Warren Billings

I think that in addition to the material contained in the article, "Police Photos Vindicate Mooney," in the NEW MASSES of August 4, public attention should be called to the legal lawlessness indulged in by the California State Supreme Court, both in their method of conducting this present hearing upon application for a writ of habeas corpus, and in their previous action upon the petition of Warren K. Billings for a recommendation of executive clemency in 1930.

In the former and present instances, their action in designating that hearings should be held before a Referee instead of before the Supreme Court itself, as provided by the Constitution of the State of Cali-ornia, is clearly illegal, and their most recent ac-ion in that regard, ordering said Referee to make ndings of fact in the matter and return to them commendations upon which their decision may be sed, indicates that their intention, expressed more a year ago in the Sacramento *Bee* to grant ney a full and complete hearing, while at the time disclosing that said intention of granting l hearing was no indication that Mooney was released as a result of said hearing, is a further demonstration of their willful lawlessness.

In the latter instance, when the matter of the application for executive clemency was presented to them, the Court had the audacity to appoint its incumbent Justices to analogous positions as unofficial fact-finding commissioners, at the same rate of salary paid to them as Justices of the State Supreme Court, and to divest itself of all its authority, even requiring that the Justices remove their caps and gowns and sit at a table on the floor of the Court Room, rather than on the bench, and thus conduct an illegal extra-judicial conclave at which sworn testimony was taken from witnesses, some of whom were "invited" in by armed officers of the law, because the Court as an unofficial commission admittedly had no power to issue process upon which such witnesses could be subpoenaed. This extra-judicial proceeding was boldly conducted without the Petitioner, Warren K. Billings, being present, and when it became desirable to secure the testimony of the Petitioner this startling body of legal giants, having no power to bring Mohammed to the mountain, moved the mountainous Supreme Court of the State of California to the Mohammed in Folsom Prison. Then, as a final gesture of defiance to all conceptions of orderly procedure, these pillars of California's great system of jurisprudence rehabilitated themselves in their vestments of office, mounted the rostrum of the Supreme Court of the great State of California, and proclaimed to the world their legal decision based upon the illegal, questionable proceedings of this despicable, unofficial fault-finding commission. Not only was this hearing conducted without the presence of the Petitioner, but no evidence in his behalf was permitted to be presented, except such testimony as the commission itself permitted to be presented and elected to hear. In this connection full cognizance should be taken of the minority opinion rendered by Justice Langdon.

WARREN K. BILLINGS.

"Championing" Proletarian Literature

For some years now I've heard much talk about what kind of proletarian literature will really reach the masses, etc. In fact, it used to be the main topic at the John Reed Club and at the various meetings of the Greenwich Village coffee-pot Reds. While there was much talk as to whether to be lowbrow or highbrow and if one should "write down" to the masses, nothing much was done about it. Our big left-wing writers still wrote, and still do, for a very limited section of the intelligentsia and were miles away from the masses. All this leads up to the following: recently I picked up the July issue of the *Champion of Youth* and read a story by one Tom Dean called "The Killer Type." I never heard of Dean before, but he has what it takes to bring left-wing literature to the people. He seems to write something that is a cross between Hemingway and a pulp story, and yet is a story that is packed with social meaning. Of course the *Champion* is meant for young men and women, but this story is the nearest thing I've seen to a leftish story with mass appeal. I would suggest that our proletarian writers study it.

H. C. HENDERSON.

Hats Off to Ufer!

Ufer is dead! Long live the Revolution!—He would like that, for in the last years of his life Communism *became* his life.

To those who did not know Walter Ufer, who died August 3: He was probably the most widely known of all the painters in the famous artist colony of Taos, New Mexico. His name is among the leading artists of America. He was a member of the National Academy of Design. His paintings have received awards in practically all of the important art exhibits.

Walter made the sleepy town of Taos conscious of the word Communism. He never received a petition —whether for Mooney, Scottsboro, or others—but he immediately hot-footed it all over Taos for signatures. Every appeal for money saw him collecting dimes, quarters, and dollars. For the Gallup miners I think he collected close to $200, nearly all in small change. His efforts were unceasing in getting subscriptions for the NEW MASSES and the *Daily Worker*. Indicative is this excerpt from the last letter I received from him—two weeks before his death:

"The students of the University are not dumb. One girl just returned *The Coming Struggle for Power*, by John Strachey, and I lent her another. The Hawaiian student has asked for a handful of NEW MASSES, and Bob G—— just gave me $4.50 for a yearly subscription to NEW MASSES. I sold P——, the tailor, the *Daily Worker*. . . ."

I think the best I can do in Ufer's memory is renew my subscription to NEW MASSES—since he sold me my first. Hats off to Ufer!

JEAN WOOLSEY.

From a Letter to Roosevelt

Franklin D. Roosevelt,
President of the United States,
Washington, D. C.
Honored President:

I read with great horror the two articles in the recent issues of the NEW MASSES on massacres of the American Jews. I am not apologizing for addressing myself to the head of my government. This is not a small issue—it involves the Constitution of the United States. When my parents pulled up stakes, fifty years ago, to come to our country where religious liberty was guaranteed, they made great sacrifices. They became loyal citizens, rearing their children in the customs of a free land under the banner of the stars and stripes.

In turn, I reared a family of four children, now adults and high in their respective professional careers. . . . Now I am past fifty, and my children are the parents of children—what Americanism can they teach their children in the face of the recent exposé? . . .

I started out to ask you a question, but digressed in order to make it patent to you why I am addressing my question to you, our honored President. If Mr. True is a 100-percent American and he openly plots pogroms against the Jew and Negro, what ideals are there left for my children to teach their children? Shall it be reprisals? Or is there an inch of ground left for the idealism of my American grandchildren?

Since I come to you in an honest endeavor to find an answer, I trust you will treat this communication with the same respect with which I am sending it to you.

EVE ROBIN.

Share Croppers Plan Strike

The Share Croppers Union decided in its recent convention to call a strike of the cotton pickers this fall. During the past two years the union has been leading strikes of the day laborers and share croppers on the plantations in central Alabama. Almost without exception these strikes have been bitterly attacked by organized mobs of landlords and their thugs. In spite of these attacks the Union has won many concessions and in some places permanent increases in wages from fifty cents to one dollar a day.

During strikes in the past, the strikers have suffered from lack of strike relief, so the convention instructed the Executive Council to raise a $300,000 strike-relief fund. The union cannot raise such a sum from among the day laborers and share croppers whose yearly income rarely equals $350.

We need your help. We ask for your moral support in our struggles and especially for your help in building the $300,000 strike-relief fund for the union in the next few weeks. Funds should be sent in care of the NEW MASSES.

CLYDE L. JOHNSON.
Secretary Treasurer, Share Croppers Union.

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REVIEW AND COMMENT

In Memoriam Henri Barbusse
Died August 30, 1935

I SAW him first in 1933, in New York. It was a few hours after he had landed. In addition to the strain of the sea voyage he was convalescing from a serious illness. Nevertheless, he went to the meeting arranged for him in Mecca Temple. He entered the hall, noisy with an overflow crowd, brilliant with lights, leaning on two friends. His arms around their shoulders were like the wings of a wounded eagle. The exalted life that burned in his wasted body could be sensed only in the glow of his sunken eyes.

No one was prepared, therefore, for his voice—powerful, passionate and melodious—that penetrated every corner of the hall. His beautiful long hands delivered an oration of their own. Rarely had human speech been so profoundly affecting. Weary and ill as he was, he left the platform only to go to another. He spoke with the same passion and power to a second meeting in another hall, hired to accommodate the overflow.

With these meetings the American League Against War and Fascism initiated its history-making activities.

When I met him last year, in Paris, Barbusse recalled with affection the ardent reception given him by workers in New York, Chicago, Pittsburgh, and elsewhere.

A year has passed since his death. Not since the funeral of Victor Hugo had France accorded to a writer so spontaneous a tribute of national mourning. The tributes of another nation, the Soviet Union, followed his hearse in the vast procession. The tributes of the world's working classes made a mound over his grave.

Henri Barbusse was born in May 1874 in Asnières, an industrial city near Paris. His father was a writer, his mother a woman descended from English farmers. He lost her at the age of three and grew up a delicate, reserved, impressionable, book-addicted child. His scholastic career was brilliant. In high school he won attention for his essays and poems. He was a prize winner all through his schooling, and was an honor student at the university.

Barbusse turned twenty during the period when Zola was the outstanding figure and exerted a strong influence. But there were many other influences in French culture. From abroad came the Messianism of Tolstoy, the fatalism of Ibsen, Strindberg, and Dostoievsky, the mysticism of Kant, Nietzsche, and Sudermann, the symbolism of Verhaeren and Maeterlinck. These mingled with other conflicting currents within France —Hugo, Rostand, Verlaine, Rimbaud. One thing resulted from this welter of influences, a sense of the universality of culture, of the international brotherhood of the human spirit. Barbusse was its product. His early writings are eclectic. They helped to form the humane spirit that distinguished his writings when he had found a literary way of his own.

His first published work was a volume of poetry, *Pleureuses* (*Those Sobbing*). He was twenty-two when it appeared. It made a good impression. It was followed eight years later by a novel, *The Suppliants,* a psychological study of his generation. The first book to found his international reputation was *Inferno,* which was translated into ten languages. It is a study of sexual conflict marked by apparently inconsolable fatalism, but it carried the promise of his literary future in its discerning analyses of social causes. In 1914 he published a book of short stories, *We Others,* which carried on the tendencies glimpsed in *Inferno,* but also fulfilled them. He was at a loss where to turn for a fresh source.

The war came. Barbusse enlisted as a private, though he was offered a commission. The will to serve with the rank and file was characteristic of him. He was wounded three times, and received two citations for valor. *Under Fire* was written in a hospital in 1915. It swept the world and brought twinges of fear to the war makers. It was translated into fifty languages, but it had to go through barrages of suppression. There was a period when it was barred in America.

Lenin read the book in Switzerland. He said of it: "If a French intellectual who never was a socialist thinks of war in such a way, then hundreds of thousands of workers in the trenches hate war and will be ready to rise against it tomorrow."

But while Barbusse had not yet turned to Socialism, he had already worked against war. He had been one of groups of intellectuals who, before the outbreak of war, had desperately tried to stave it off by advocating international arbitration. The failure of these efforts in August 1914 convinced him of the futility of pure pacifism in the attainment of world peace, and after he had himself gone through the hell of war he probed realistically into its causes. This was the theme of *Under Fire* where, in one of the concluding passages, he writes:

> Ah! You are right, poor workers of the numberless battles. You who fought this whole great war with your own hands. Whose faces are worn with a world of suffering.
>
> There is nothing behind it but those monstrously interested in the war—financiers, big and small business men safe in their guarded banks or in their protected homes. They live off the war but live in peace during it. Their foreheads are closed to scruple, their faces are hard.
>
> With them are the priests who incite you or lull you to sleep with the morphine of their paradise. Only in order that nothing might change here on earth.
>
> With them too are lawyers, economists, historians, and who knows what not—all those who confuse you with their theories, who perpetrate and proclaim antagonisms between races and nations. While in reality, every modern nation has nothing but abstract and arbitrary geographical boundaries, and none of them is a race but a racial amalgam.

In 1917 in the midst of the war he organized the Republican Association of Ex-Service Men in France, which broadened into an international organization against militarism. And immediately after the war Barbusse threw himself into the gigantic task of preventing future wars. In 1918, while at Versailles, the makers of the false "peace" that has bred fascism and war were at work, Barbusse was publishing *Clarté,* a manifesto to humanity. He wrote:

> I am thrusting my call simultaneously into all countries, and before all into those against whom France has fought. From now on we don't want to differentiate among people according to their nationalities. The word "foreign" has no more the former superficial connotation. The word "victory" has no more the meaning which French and German chauvinists gave to it. In every land and everywhere in the world there are only two kinds of strangers, and two kinds of enemies set against each other: the exploiters and the exploited.

But he did not limit his action to writing. He organized "Clarté" groups in many countries of the world. It was an attempt to develop the vague, unorganized, bourgeois good will and idealism into a movement capable of serving the drive to world peace of a revolutionary economic theory. The activities bore some fruit, but not enough. When Barbusse withdrew to enter other work, the Clarté groups disintegrated.

Interest in Communism now began to preoccupy him. In 1920 he had written two books addressed to intellectuals, which dealt sympathetically with Communism. He wrote in one of them:

> Communism is a practical conception and strategy in the midst of economic conditions peculiar to a present-day society; it is an eternal truth with no contradictions to reason or conscience. If one examines it in a frank and objective way, one will discover that all justified needs for the liberation of the human race find in it not only a natural place but a real vitality as a part of a whole.

He joined the Communist Party in 1 Even to the most chauvinist audiences said with challenging pride, "I have

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honor of being a Communist!" and from then on his following was not only among intellectuals, but among the war veterans, and among the workers. He had won universal respect.

From 1928 on, his books dealt mostly with Russia, where he went periodically to plunge himself, as he said, into that atmosphere of energy, that spa for the rejuvenation of forces, that inspiring creativeness and bubbling over of personality, of the Soviet people. He said and repeated, "Artists today must go to Russia as during the Renaissance they went to Italy."

His activity was amazing. Not only did he give the world a constant stream of books. He was at the same time active as an editor of journals, a speaker, an organizer, leader. Neither distance nor bad seasons pt him from his organizing rounds which cluded almost every country in the world. nd all the forces that could be associated ı the struggle against war-breeding imperialism were used by him. The veterans' association he organized has already been mentioned. He saw the importance of the liberation movement of colonial peoples and was active in the Pro-Hindu committee and one of the initiators of the anti-imperialist league. As reaction and white terror rose in Europe, he led in the movements to succor its victims and to check its advance.

In 1932 Barbusse called the World Congress Against War, at Amsterdam. This was the beginning of a new era in the history of the working class. At that time discord in the ranks of the world's working class was at its height. It seemed hopelessly split and at war with itself instead of against its world enemy, now concentrating its forces in the thrust of fascism. Now Socialists, trade unionists, liberals, republicans responded to this call by a professed Communist. Three thousand delegates representing 30 million people attended. The success of this congress was followed by the European Congress Against War and Fascism held in Paris the following year. It was the greatest gathering of formerly opposed groups ever seen in France or elsewhere. It was the foreshadowing of the United Front movement.

The test of the effectiveness of these gatherings came in 1934. The French fascists attempted a coup on February 12, and were met by a general strike. The unity of democratic anti-fascist forces for which Barbusse had helped to lay the base, proved itself in this action. Another demonstration of this union was given on last year's Bastille Day, when, in a spontaneous outpouring, the workers commanded Paris as they had never done since the days of the Commune. Barbusse's speech was perhaps the climax of the occasion. It was his last and one of his greatest addresses. As if he had a premonition of the end, the speech ended on this exhortation:

And finally, Comrades: You must not see that the grandiose demonstration of today be a manifestation of one day only. That this great moving ocean of people marching by since early morning shall halt tonight. Our enemies will set to work tomorrow and form powerful coalitions. We also begin our new tasks tomorrow, and pledge that we will continue to work together to the end. We won the first great battle, this of unity of anti-fascist forces. Our destiny calls for more victories."

This legacy of work is what Barbusse has left his comrades in the struggle.

Who are these comrades? They are the workers of the world. They are also the intellectuals whom he sought to organize for the defense of culture even before the World War. The International Congress of Writers in Defense of Culture that assembled in Paris in June 1935 was the most distinguished gathering of writers ever assembled. Among them were Gide, Malraux, Heinrich Mann, Aldous Huxley, Nexo, Koltzov, Tikhonov. And among them the outstanding figure was the tall, emaciated, sick but untiring Barbusse, who was present at every session, who watched over every proceeding of the Congress, though already the death that was to strike him two months later was visible in his wasted body.

SONJA HARTWIG.

Anima Naturaliter Marxiana?

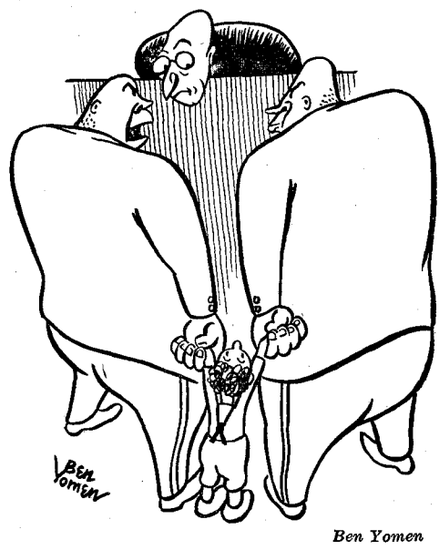
ESSAYS ANCIENT AND MODERN, by T. S. Eliot. Harcourt, Brace & Co. 203 pages. $2.

ELIOT is so damn sensible, his literary judgment so sound, his prose (save for that habit of references within references) so clear in ordonnance and precision, that the extreme battiness of some of his ideas is more than proportionally exasperating. He is, as he stands, everything that Mr. Allen Tate, for instance, would like to be considered: a perfect specimen of the man who has a beautiful critical intelligence, yet declines to profess and call himself Marxist. On the one or two occasions (in this book) when Eliot mentions dialectical materialism, he seems to be against it, like the famous Coolidge preacher on Sin. It does look like poor economy, however, to pronounce him anathema, a shame to cast into outer darkness one who can be read with so much profit and delight. If we stretch the mantle of charity, and exercise our own imagination and wit, we can salvage Eliot for our edification in very much the same way that those early fathers of the church took with Virgil, whom they excused as, at heart, one of themselves—*anima naturaliter Christiana.* The method requires of our faculties no more than a judicious substitution of terms.

Suppose, for instance, we consider the occasion to be one of a series of addresses arranged by the League of American Writers; the subject "Marxism and Literature"; the speech a paraphrase of Eliot: "What I have to say is largely in support of the following propositions: Literary criticism should be completed by criticism from a definite ethical and dialectical standpoint. In ages like our own, in which there is no common agreement, it is the more necessary for Marxian readers to scrutinize their reading, especially works of the imagination, with explicit ethical and dialectical standards. The 'greatness' of literature cannot be determined solely by literary standards; though we must remember that whether it is literature or not can be determined only by literary standards.

"It is enough to suggest that the work of Clarendon, or Gibbon, or Buffon, or Bradley would be of inferior literary value if it were insignificant as history, science, and philosophy respectively. . . . The persons who enjoy these writings *solely* because of their literary merit are essentially parasites. . . .

"If the mass of contemporary authors were really individualists . . . there might be something to be said for the liberal attitude. . . . It is not that the world of separate individuals of the liberal democrat is undesirable; it is simply that this world does not exist. For the reader of contemporary literature is not, like the reader of the established great literature of all time, exposing himself to the influence of divers and contradictory personalities; he is exposing himself to a mass movement of writers who, each of them, think that they have something individually to offer, but are really all working together in the same direction. And there never was a time, I believe, when the reading public was so large, or so helplessly exposed to the influences of its own time. There never was a time, I believe, when those who read at all, read so many more books by living authors than books by dead authors; there never was a time so completely parochial, so shut off from the past. . . . Individualistic democracy has come to



Ben Yomen

"We caught him reading the *New Pioneer.*"

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high tide; and it is more difficult today to be an individual than it ever was before. . . .

"It is our business, as readers of literature, to know what we like. It is our business, as Communists, *as well as* readers of literature, to know what we ought to like. It is our business as honest men not to assume that whatever we like is what we ought to like; and it is our business as honest Communists not to assume that we do like what we ought to like. And the last thing I would wish for would be the existence of two literatures, one for Communist consumption, and the other for the rest of the world. What I believe to be incumbent upon all Communists is the duty of maintaining consciously certain standards and criteria of criticism over and above those applied by the rest of the world; and that by these criteria and standards everything we read must be tested. We must remember that the greater part of our current reading matter is written for us by people who have no real belief in a classless order, although some of it may be written by people with individual notions of a classless order which are not ours. . . . So long as we are conscious of the gulf fixed between ourselves and the greater part of contemporary literature, we are more or less protected from being harmed by it, and are in a position to extract from it whatever good it has to offer us. . . . We shall certainly continue to read the best of its kind, of what our time provides; but we must tirelessly criticize it according to our own principles, and not merely according to the principles admitted by the writers and by the critics who discuss it in the public press."

Or suppose the address to be concerned with the topic, "Communism and International Order." We are committed to what in the eyes of the world must be a desperate belief, that a Communist world-order, *the* Communist world-order, is ultimately the only one which, from any point of view, will work. . . .

"So far, in fact, as we individually concern ourselves with present social, political, economic problems, we as Communists are committed to a much more searching analysis both of the problems and of every solution put forward than the ordinary member of the public, or even the ordinary specialist, feels called upon to make. . . . What I have in mind is that only the Communist thinker is compelled to examine all his premises, and try to start from the fundamental terms and propositions. . . . All one's views and theories, of course, have some ultimate relation to the kind of man one is. But only the Communist, in practice, is under the manifest obligation to find out what sort of man he is—because he is under the obligation to improve that man according to definite ideals and standards. The non-Communist, feeling no obligation to alter himself and therefore no cogent need to understand himself, is apt to be under the sway of his prejudices, his social background, his individual tastes. So, I dare say, are we: but we at least, I hope, admit our duty to try to subdue them. . . .

"I feel, then, no confidence in any proposal for putting the world in order until the proposer has answered satisfactorily the question: what is the good life? Very often, I fear, he can give no better answer than pointing to the kind of life that he, as a natural man and a separated individual, happens to like. . . . Instead of bringing to bear the whole history of our civilization upon our particular emergencies we may be merely applying recent or local ways of thinking. . . . We ourselves, I suspect, are liable to fall into booby-traps of our own setting. We are in danger always of translating notions too literally from one order to another. . . . Deviation is always possible; and where there is one possible deviation, there are always at least two; and when two doctrines contradict each other, we do not always remember that both may be wrong. . . . I consider that only Marxist and Communist thought, operating in the sphere of sociology, can save us from these extremes which can only create worse confusion when they meet. . . .

"Our duty, it seems to me, with regard to all purely liberal attempts to set the world right, is to welcome them for what they are worth, when they have any good in them, and at the same time proclaim their limitations and the danger of expecting more of them than such human inventions can perform. . . . In any public causes to which we may devote ourselves, we are always likely to find ourselves allied with non-Communists of good will; and we have sometimes to remind ourselves of the very different presuppositions which can underlie a common action. I have already suggested that the world is liable to set its ideals too low and its expectations too high; that it is apt to put a blind faith in mechanism; that it is apt to hope that an intelligent recognition of material interests and possibilities, arrived at by conferences and reports, will set things right. . . . This moral laziness and evasion is something we must combat. . . .

"What we have to concern ourselves with primarily is the causes in modern society, in our industrial and financial machinery it may be, which bring about the kind of war which we have experienced; and to give our adherence to all alterations in that machinery which tend to remove the motives. . . .

"In the long run, I believe that the Communist faith is also the only practical one. That does not mean that we are provided with an infallible calculating machine for knowing what should be done in any contingency; it means perpetual new thinking to meet perpetually changing situations. The attitude of the Communist towards any form of organization, national or international, must always be a specific attitude towards a specific situation. . . ."

Quotation, at this point, must cease, and apologies be extended not for the length, but for the scantiness of it. Much more to be sure has been given than was necessary for a *tour de force,* a feat of distortion or wickedness, or a good joke on the old St. Louis boy who went to England and off the deep end. There is a serious point to make; and it is better made the more fully one can scrutinize the texture and pattern of the prose argument. Eliot has seemed to present a personality split beyond all reconciliation: in poetry, the last great artist of the bourgeoisie, a prophet of revolution; in prose, a compound of anachronisms, suspect of fascism, or at least an advocate of medieval reaction. By taking (or leaving) him on these terms, we have ourselves achieved the medieval state of mind which we deplore in him. We have been showing a belief in miracles; no one man could possibly be as completely schizoid as all that. The confusion has come from our inability to recognize a central identity when its manifestations were presented diversely. We mistook distinct operations of sensitivity and intellect for essences rather than phenomena—or thought them reflections of separate objects, rather than different means of conveying the same substance. Sensitivity and intellect, of course, are not fully discrete entities; in any man's case they impinge on each other; and in the case of Eliot, they not only impinge but infringe each on the other's department. When his poetry seems hard and dry, as it often does, we can usually find that the intellect persists in acting as a brake or check on the operations of the sensitivity—thus we get those effects of diffidence and dissonance, the finical French touch, the intellectual irony that disguises and rebukes the pure functioning of the subconscious. His acute and direct experience of the extreme sickness of bourgeois society includes in the category of the unbearable a positive rational statement of its findings. Likewise, when the intelligence is dominant, and arrives (as our quotations have indicated) at substantially radical conclusions, the recessive sensitivity intervenes to cushion the mind from the shock, and disguise the realities in more endurable form. The dying bourgeois cannot bear to envisage his inevitable end.

Himself a product of bourgeois culture, Eliot (whose apprehension of its demise is extraordinarily subtle) has worked out a system which is opposed, not simply to its chaos and dissolution, but to all the characteristic cultural values it established: to romanticism in art, to protestantism in religion, to "individualistic democracy" (*i. e.,* plutocratic oligarchy or anarchy) in politics. It is clear that he aspires to a more communistic order of life: curious that Eliot, who has read apparently so much of everybody else, has never devoted himself to Marx or Lenin, and yet has approximated many Marxist conclusions.

That he has said A, and cannot say B, need not be taken angrily. We have objectives to gain, and no time to yield to compassion for whatever correlation of forces or crisis of personal history has made Eliot, in one sense, a casualty; nor can we afford just now to comb the battlefield for the exact site of his fall, there to erect a commemorative marker. What we can do is say B for him and put him to a use beyond the faculties of

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other side. Eliot may, in time, turn up in the fascist ranks (though he seems too smart for a fascist) but, however great our wariness, to call him, on the evidence of this book, a positive force in the fascist array, seems to me the sorriest sort of apprehensive Leftism.

The present collection contains eight other essays besides the two which have required the major emphasis of this notice. Of these, five are reprinted from earlier collections; three, at least ("Lancelot Andrewes," "John Bramhall," "Francis Herbert Bradley") are rather special exercises in the preservation of culture, and the lay reader may risk skipping them, though skipping any Eliot is risky business. The remarks on "Baudelaire in Our Time" take on an increment of interest from the fact that two American poets have recently published what appears from all accounts to be a pretty poor translation of the author of *Flowers of Evil.* There are some amusing observations in "Modern Education and the Classics"; and no American poet, or critic either, for that matter, should overlook the admirable essay on Tennyson.

ROLFE HUMPHRIES.

A Scientist Finds Himself

SKUTAREVSKY, by Leonid Leonov. Harcourt Brace & Co. $2.50.

"THE distance which Leonov has covered is so great," wrote Gorky, "that I know of no instance of such rapid growth in our old Russian literature." Leonov's work has shown a marked progression from provincial themes dealing with secondary characters to more comprehensive social themes in which key figures of the new Soviet life play a dominant role. The dispersive energy and the ornamentation of much of his earlier work have been replaced by the confident firmness of conception in *Skutarevsky.* The growth of the Soviet Union is reflected in the growth of his art.

Skutarevsky is the story of a brilliant scientist whose career was a bridge from the old to the new Russia. The impact of the greatest social transformation in history upon the life of a gifted individual provides a magnificent theme for the novelist. It is a theme which lends itself to mechanical and obvious treatment; and it is a tribute to Leonov's skill that he has at no point descended into the dull world of the fictionized formula. The combination of influences which affect the mind of a Skutarevsky are interesting precisely because they are so subtle: a proletarian boyhood, a brilliant scientific career under czarism, the revolution, the new world, and the heavy burden of the old world in the form of prejudiced taste and family loyalty. The integration of a personality against such a background is a baffling problem involving at once a sympathetic awareness of the psychology of genius as well as a clear understanding of social development. If at times the portrait of the character seems somewhat blurred and incoherent, that may be attributed not so much to the ineptitude of the novelist as to the confusion of the character himself.

Midway in his career the ground under Skutarevsky's feet shifted completely. His values had been created in a world which was to die long before he died. By 1917 Skutarevsky had achieved a world-wide reputation as a theoretical physicist. With the outbreak of the revolution Lenin called upon him to help in the construction of large power units, the central task of the new government. His visit to Lenin was symbolic: he came in evening clothes. The scientist was not a Bolshevik; but he had refused to participate in the June bourgeois government because he thought "the world is past curing with enemas." The proletarian regime placed every available scientific resource at his disposal, and he was able, for the first time, to engage in scientific activity without being molested by considerations of profit. It was as a scientist rather than as a politically conscious being that he was drawn into the new scheme. There was no alternative for a scientist except to build for destruction.

The revolution prospered and Skutarevsky became one of the great names in the academies. But life was not simple; the old world refused to die peacefully. His family life was a muddle. His wife collected fake old masters and as many pre-revolutionary knick-knacks as she could buy from bourgeois beggars who refused to work; his son was involved in a conspiracy to overthrow the regime —his tragically deceived son, who wakened from his nightmare of terrorism to commit suicide. (The fate of Arseny affords an interesting parallel to the recent trial in Moscow: the impulse to blot out a past activity which is too horrible to contemplate through a will to death.) And his affair with a young girl, at once an escape from personal distress and an effort to identify himself completely with the new world, provided only a temporary solution.

His major problem was to separate himself from the past, to integrate his scientific thought with a new order of things. Not that Skutarevsky ever had any doubts about the value and the durability of the Soviets, nor that he in any sense yearned for a former age; it was not that easy. He was working on a new electrical project, and he was shattered by the thought that it might fail, that the masses would pull him into the dust when he was no longer of any use to them. He had an overwhelming need to be understood, and it was his obsession that only scientists, not a world of workers, could understand him. This difficulty is resolved at the end of the novel when Skutarevsky, after the complete failure of his experiment, reluctantly addresses a meeting of workers. Many of his scientific colleagues were seeking his overthrow as director of the Institute; surely the workers would be with them. In addressing them, "He pursed his lips sternly. 'Comrades . . .' he began, almost inquiringly. And just as if his name had only just reached the minds of the assembly, he was interrupted by a thunder of applause . . . that magnificent welcome was expressive of much—and in the first place of an invitation to share his temporary failure with millions of others, each little portion then losing its poisonous, destructive bitterness." One feels at the end a sense of exaltation, a sense that in the world of those unnamed approvers lies unbounded courage and triumph; it is a world to which Skutarevsky will descend from his lofty mountain-top.

But the novel is not primarily interesting for its plot, however indispensable that may be. It is in the delicate perception of the equivocal relationship between two worlds of feeling and of thought, in the sense of a character growing within the context of a society, that Leonov achieves his main effects. The rich background of character, the gay humor, and the confident criticism of the awkward aspects of Soviet life (although these are always viewed as peripheral) give a scope to the book which novels of individual character rarely attain. The translation by Alec Brown, if one may judge without having read the original, is an excellent piece of work.

WALTER RALSTON.

Not Ambassadors

NOAH PANDRE, by Salman Schnéour. Lee Furman, Inc. $2.

EARLY HISTORY OF A SEWING-MACHINE OPERATOR, by Nathan and Charles Resnikoff. Published by Charles Resnikoff, 10 W. 36th St., New York City. $1.25.

REPLYING to a harassed Jewish intellectual questioning why there is anti-Semitism, Havelock Ellis gave a flattering but unserviceable answer. He said that the Jews, no matter what the reason for it, were innovators and therefore raised up against themselves the human fear and hatred of the new. Marx, Freud, Bergson, Einstein, were four reasons, among others in recent history, why there was antagonism toward the Jews. Each had upset the stability of ideas in his field and the resulting unease and irritation found a channel, at a lower level, in anti-Semitism. His remarks illustrate one of the peculiarities of the situation of the Jews, that their leading men are put in the position of unofficial ambassadors. This is true not only for the preëminent but for lesser scientists, artists, and writers, and indeed for all professionals in contact with Gentiles. The sensitive Jew is the product of this situation; and as another consequence, his literature presents a life tainted to some degree with abnormality, each book being a case history.

The special interest of the two books under review is that they present Jews who are

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not intellectuals and ambassadors. Undistinguished workers, they live as Jews in somewhat the same matter-of-fact fashion that Englishmen live as Englishmen.

In his novel, *Noah Pandre,* the Yiddish writer, Salman Schnéour, asserts his preference for the workers. For him they are the vital parts of the Jewish organism. He opens his book with a lyrical apostrophe to them from which I quote a few lines: "Where are you now, you Jews like oaks, with your broad-capped jack-boots, your quashed and burnt noses like those of lions? You coachmen, butchers, water-carriers, plasterers, hewers of wood. . . . You were the reservoirs of the healthy blood and the earthy passions of the people of Israel. . . . But for the red sap in your powerful limbs, but for the ancient fire in your veins, Jewish life would consist of nothing but weaklings, supercilious noses, crooked heads, neurasthenics."

It was inevitable that with such a predisposition Schnéour's book should seem overdrawn, that passages in it should at times have an absurd ring; these passages, however, he saves from absurdity by sudden deliberate exaggerations which, as hyperboles, manage to validate them. Even without this, the sheer vitality of the writing and the energy of the narrative would have carried it. Schnéour is a natural story teller, one of the few in our period.

His hero, Noah Pandre, takes on at times the character of a Jewish Paul Bunyan. He is huge, powerful, merry, generous, kind, helpful, courageous. He performs feats which make him the Samson of the village. He has the trustfulness of the healthy and the self-reliant, is one of those who are astonished and aroused to fury by the sight of injustice. Withal he is respectful. He changes his trade from that of butcher to coachman at the suggestion of the rabbi. He respects authority, but when a czarist official drunkenly abuses a citizen he intervenes. Such independence and resolution is not to be endured in a Jew, and he is framed and jailed. The event lifts his vision above the village horizon. On his return from prison he has his mind made up on one thing: he will seek out the Socialists. Where the instinct for justice has led other good men, Noah Pandre will go, also.

Early History of a Sewing-Machine Operator is the story of a Jewish worker told with more scrupulous realism and without devices of exaggeration. It is the account of the life, up to early manhood, of Nathan Resnikoff, told to his writer son, Charles, whose own story, *By the Waters of Manhattan,* was one of the most moving books in the literature of Jewish life in America. Charles Resnikoff has attempted to preserve the very language of his father; at times, to balance the sense of authenticity, the book has the limitations of a document. This does not happen to such an extent that it confines the narrative or frustrates character. The story opens in a Russian village and passes through its alternations of hardship and comfort, misery and pleasure. The insecurity of life in old Russia is made clear. It drives Nathan Resnikoff to America, where he meets with it in its American forms. His story illustrates the Jewish enterprise and endurance born of necessity; but it illustrates also the powerful appetite for life, and the unhesitating pride of a type of Jewish worker. It is an unusual and valuable little book. The two together indicate emphatically that a presentation of the life of workers illustrating not latent power and joy but actual power and joy, is a discovery of new values that proletarian literature can make.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Design for Lying

CANNERY ANNE, by Morris Hull. Houghton Mifflin Co. $2.

THE cannery workers are quaint, carefree people. Just children, really. The boys and girls work feverishly, side by side, loving the rush and excitement of it all. They curse their long hours and the antiquated machinery, but they don't really mean it, because they really love their boss, who is a generous, impulsive fellow, given to hiding five-dollar bills among the tomatoes at the end of the season.

Our authority for this exposé is Mr. Hull, who is a young man fresh from a season in some idyllic but unnamed California cannery. His novel opens an alarming vista. If Cannery Anne, why not Brewery Bridget, Assembly Line Emmaline, or Johnny O'Neil of U.S. Steel? Thus will be born a new school in proletarian literature, the Happiness School. As a special service to readers, we are able to outline the plot of these forthcoming novels. The heroine is discovered tripping happily down the gleaming road at daybreak, her golden hair shimmering in the sun. On reaching the factory, which she learned to love last season, her gruff old boss signs her on and, learning her penniless condition, shyly slips her a five-spot. The hero enters in a lilting little car, with a smile on his face and twinkle in his eye. The other men know at once he can Take It. The boy and girl work furiously side by side, and somehow the jittering cans (substitute any other item of production) always seem to keep time with her jolly song. There is a humorous character working nearby whose hands are absurdly bandaged from injuries, but as the author points out, hurts are as often as not the man's own fault. A fatal injury causes the workers to bow humbly before inscrutable fate. In the end the boy and girl decide to get married, but the boss's feelings are hurt if they don't tell him in time for him to throw a party for them. Next year they are going to build a little plant of their own, ungratefully enough right next to the boss's, out of their savings.

Unions? Obviously out of place in such a happy scene. The novelist may employ the technique of Total Non-mention adopted by Mr. Hull, for whom the Cannery & Agricultural Workers Industrial Union never existed; but in a timely book of such potentialities as Johnny O'Neil of U.S. Steel it will be of obvious value to show up the C.I.O. organizers in their scurrilous efforts to sow discord in such an industrial paradise as the book will inevitably reveal. Followers of the Hull tradition will also not mention wages.

Mr. Hull must forgive us if we quote from his own fore-note: "The cannery in this book is fictitious, and so are all the people."

SEBASTIAN STONE.

On Social Security

INSECURITY—A CHALLENGE TO AMERICA, by Abraham Epstein. Revised Edition. Random House. $4.

TOWARD SOCIAL SECURITY, by Eveline M. Burns. Whittlesey House. $2.

DURING April, the Senate Committee on Education and Labor conducte hearings on the general subject of social in surance. We quote from the transcript:

> SENATOR DAVID WALSH, CHAIRMAN: Do yo really feel that the plan we have adopted [the federal Social Security Act], after it becomes operative, is going to contribute to the extension of the depression and increase unemployment?
>
> MR. ABRAHAM EPSTEIN: I am convinced of it.
>
> CHAIRMAN WALSH: And do more economic harm than good?
>
> MR. EPSTEIN: I think that the two plans of the old-age and unemployment security will definitely bring us into greater havoc and a greater depression than anything we have ever done.

Abraham Epstein is the executive secretary of the American Association for Social Security, a reformist organization which advances modest demands and is usually willing to settle for less. His steadfast refusal to lend any support to the Social Security Act has been a severe blow to the pretensions of the administration. Now no one, outside of a few Democratic apologists, seriously contends that the present act will provide social security. There are those, like Dr. Eveline Burns, author of *Toward Social Security,* who feel that the act, with all its faults, "nevertheless is a great achievement . . . [that] it should be accepted as a foundation upon which, by amendment, there shall be built a law to rid this country of the disgraceful insecurity which has so long characterized it." Mr. Epstein, rejecting such wishful thinking, writes: "To lay the foundations of a system which may aggravate the insecurity of the American people rather than strengthen their security is hardly 'a beginning.' Any step may represent 'movement,' but it makes a difference in which direction a step is taken."

In *Insecurity—A Challenge to America* perhaps his greatest service is to clarify the fundamental distinction between private insurance and social insurance. Private insurance is based upon actuarial computations which involve the balancing of premium income with benefit outgo. This requires that the beneficiaries of the insurance share only to the extent that they contribute. The pri vate insurance fund is self-sustaining and th generousness of the total benefits is necessa ily limited to what the insured participa can afford. Mr. Epstein's book piles pr upon proof, listing the experience of alm

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every civilized country in the world, that any social insurance plan built upon the principles of private insurance is foredoomed to failure. A conspicuous example is Germany, where the breakdown of the insurance system played directly into the hands of Hitler.

Social insurance, Epstein makes clear, is essentially a method of transferring part of the excessive income appropriated by the wealthiest groups back to the underpaid and the underprivileged. Whether this transfer is accomplished through unemployment benefits, old-age pensions, mothers' assistance, or disability compensation, its purpose and effect remain the same. The achievement of a real social-security program implies recognition of national responsibility for the disastrous consequences of the nation's economic activities. The present Social Security Act will collapse primarily because it evades this responsibility, because it is designed to spare the rich and tax the poor. "No system which involved the taking of contributions from poor Paul for impoverished Peter," Epstein observes, "could possibly survive long." Epstein, along with his colleagues on the Left who advocate the Frazier-Lundeen Bill, calls for sharp taxation of large incomes, large inheritances, corporate surpluses, and similar reservoirs of national wealth, to provide the indispensable means for adequate social insurance. *Insecurity—A Challenge to America,* although marred at times by conservative statistics and somewhat vitiated by its author's nineteenth-century reformism, still holds its place as one of the best documented, and one of the most reliable comprehensive treatments of social security problems we have seen.

Toward Social Security, a brief and simplified analysis of the Security Act, answers the questions, Who pays for the act? Who is included in its benefits? Who is excluded? What kinds and amounts of security are provided? Less trenchant than Mr. Epstein, Dr. Burns nevertheless marks the narrow limits of the act and indicates its gross inadequacy. In the light cast by either book, the boast of Secretary of Labor Perkins that the act "provides the majority of our people with a substantial measure of security in infancy and childhood, in economic crises of their working life, and in their old age" is revealed as unfounded. The fight for social security still lies ahead.

MORT and E. A. GILBERT.

Brief Review

MY TEN YEARS IN A QUANDARY AND HOW THEY GREW, by Robert Benchley. Harper & Bros. $2.50. Robert Benchley's humor is a small glass of orange juice, lighter than prune juice in color and consistency, sunnier and considerably more effective as an aid to digestion. Its Nile-green binding will match the most exacting bathroom ensemble. Many of the individual essays are as cute as Shirley Temple. Five of them are cuter. Fourteen are cuter than Alexander Woollcott. As a guide to Robert Benchley's tastes in haberdashery, autogiros, and psychiatry, it is one of the finest books published in recent years. Haste makes waste. On the other hand, a stitch in time saves nine. E. N.

The Theater

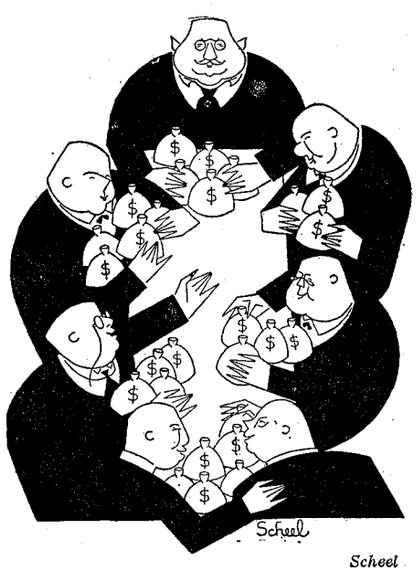
Hunting the Stag in New England

IF YOU get out the old geography, turn to the map of Massachusetts, and draw a straight line from Northampton to Wellesley, another from Wellesley to South Hadley, and a third from South Hadley back to Northampton, you will have enclosed in a long isosceles triangle the dark and bloody ground that is the most dangerous spot in North America for the unsuspecting eligible male. Here the lovely young things from Mount Holyoke, Smith, and Wellesley range in packs, making the night hideous with their silvery pealing laughter and their rapid-fire repartee. A mere man wandering into this dangerous territory is, as Hickory Jim used to say, a gone raccoon.

Or so, at any rate, Mr. Philip Barry, in his new play that opened at the Empire the other night, would have us believe. And for corroboration he has this to offer: the original script from which he adapted *Spring Dance* was written by Eleanor Golden and Eloise Barrangon, two young ladies of Northampton. They should know.

The play tells the story of how one such pack, in a nice way, got its man—and, indeed, there was something about it of the from-each-according-to-his-ability-to-each-according-to-his-need idea, too, because of the four young ladies, only one needed the young man (and she needed him bad, because it was love with her), but hadn't the stuff to get him single-handed. The others didn't want him, but brought him down for her because she was one of the gang; all there was in it for them was the satisfaction of a good job well done.

Which, it must be confessed, is both something more and something less than Mr. Barry can have got out of writing this play.



Scheel

Something less because *Spring Dance* seems likely to make him quite a little money; something more because while the play is certainly well done, it can hardly be called a good job in the sense that it is an effort worthy of Mr. Barry's talent. And when one says "well done" about *Spring Dance,* it doesn't mean mere precisian craftsmanship and glibness. The author has had the wit to hold off his comedy until he has had a chance to get his audience solidly interested in his situation by letting them glimpse a little serious and honest heartbreak. When he has shown that on the part of the girl, and made the boy out to be something of a heel suffering from Noel Cowardice, then, of course, he can allow the girls to loose the hounds of horseplay and Machiavellian plotting without (1) making the audience feel that the goings-on are oh so unimportant, and (2) making the audience regard the girls as a lot of blankety-blank buttinskys. Also, he (or the Northampton young ladies) has brought into the lines the authentic speech of the bourgeois collegiate young, Model 1936, in all its self-conscious, circumlocutory hardness. A document, therefore, ladies and gentlemen; but from a less capable wordsmith than Mr. Barry, I'll take vanilla. It must be said, further, that Mr. Barry shows himself in touch with the times when he has his romantically wanderlustful hero choose the Soviet Union as the place he must visit for contact with the Big, the Vital, the Free. And of course there are the gags, which really make the play. Beautifully spaced and timed (in which Director Jed Harris functions with his usual expertness), they go off not like a string of firecrackers, but like Roman candles: explosive, but without confusion and with a momentary lingering grace. The youngsters in the cast (with special laurels for three or four of them) do a good job all around.

But coming out of the theater onto the hot sidewalks of Broadway, you realize that nothing much has happened. You're pretty mad anyway because you suddenly realize that you've been sweltering inside (comes the revolution, legit theaters will be cooled); you get all the madder when you realize that the thing that made you forget the heat, the superior talent of the playwright, has been spent on something not quite worthy of an adult mind. There are so many more exciting and dramatic things in life, including other things that go on at New England girls' colleges. But Mr. Barry is nobody's fool, and he writes like a streak. Perhaps it is not too fatuous to hope that some day he'll shake off the hobbles and hit his real stride.

ALEXANDER TAYLOR.

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The Screen

THE current crop of movie offerings is about average, which means none outstandingly good, a few that are passable entertainment and are interesting for other reasons, and a few that can be regarded only as inferior ways of killing time. One thing about this week's showings: three of them use the movement of social forces as background material.

One of these is *The General Died at Dawn.* It hurts us to report that the preview of this film, excerpts from the scenario of which were published in the NEW MASSES of July 28, was a disappointment to the liberals and radicals —not to mention the cinema theoreticians— who had been invited. Some of the strong lines quoted in the NEW MASSES article are properly pointed up by Lewis Milestone's direction and are feelingly delivered by Gary Cooper, but the main context of the picture is (excuse the expression) slop, in the general tradition of the Cooper-Dietrich mysterious glamorous lady with a heart of gold and the hard-fisted lone-wolf adventurer, also with a heart of gold.

The fact that O'Hara (Gary Cooper) is adventuring in the cause of the Chinese peasantry against the war lord Yang (Akim Tamiroff, of the old Moscow Art Theater) pales into insignificance beside the see-saw of love and hate between him and Judy (Madeleine Carroll). Just whose fault it is, is hard to say. Milestone's direction was sharply criticized by some of the weisenheimers as being both ragged and self-conscious, while others razzed Odets for allowing his first film to turn out so disappointingly. Still others pointed out that someone named Booth had written the story, which Odets had merely scenarized, and that the worst thing about the picture was that it followed the old box-office formula, a fact which could be accounted for by Paramount's production policy without anyone else being at all at fault. Let's agree that it is a disappointment from the left-wing and "artistic" point of view. And then let's admit that for a film of its kind, some of the lines and some of the direction and most of the acting and photography are better than average.

Another film placed against a background of social forces is *To Mary—With Love,* the new Myrna Loy vehicle. Here the changing economic life of America from 1926 to 1936 is used as the basic character and situation determiner in the lives of an upper-middle-class couple. We see them marrying in 1926, developing strained relations along toward 1929, when the husband (Warner Baxter) is money-crazy, coming together again when the crash has him flat on his back and he needs a woman's care, going apart again when the partial recovery has given him enough of a break for his wife (whom he has alienated by infidelity) to feel he can get along without her. The final reconciliation, however, is not effected by the social forces, but by the faithful friend of both (Ian Keith), who is, alas, fruitlessly in love with the lady. This is another old formula, of course, but the motivations give it more than ordinary meaning and credibility. There's an interesting use of documentation: the old Waldorf, where they're married, is before us in the life; there are newsreels of the second Dempsey-Tunney fight and of Lindbergh's return; and there are newspaper quotes from prominent jackasses on the meaning of the depression—quotes which first appeared in the *New Yorker* and later reappeared in a book called *Boners* issued by Viking Press. The fact that Hoover and Coolidge are among those quoted, greatly to their disadvantage, plus the fact that the T.V.A. project is favorably referred to by Miss Loy, give the film a special edge in these campaign days. Sense and sensibility are constantly at war in the picture, to the distress of the onlooker, but one of Miss Loy's lines is strong enough to shatter the context and speak volumes. "Everyone keeps saying," she says, "that the movies should be more like life. I think life should be more like the movies." The story is by Richard Sherman, a young man who in 1933 published a story in *Vanity Fair* sneering at what he regarded as the temporary fad for radical political thinking.

In *The Gorgeous Hussy,* you will be surprised to learn, Miss Joan Crawford steps forth as a champion of the principle that if love clashes with politics, love can go hang. It is really not her idea, of course, she being merely the puppet of dat ole davil Samuel Hopkins Adams, who wrote the story. But you must admit that such a notion in a Crawford picture is really something. It sounds like a propaganda film, doesn't it? Well, it is: propaganda for the Jacksonian position on maintaining the federal Union. Accordingly, the lice and rats of this picture are the Secessionists. The conflict between Union sovereignty and States' Rights is the background of the picture (with little or no mention of the economic reasons for the clash), in which Jackson and his wife, Daniel Webster, Calhoun, and John Randolph are characters. Besides Miss Crawford, the leading performers are Lionel Barrymore, Melvyn Douglas, Franchot Tone, Robert Taylor, and Alison Skipworth.

Swing Time, with Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers, is a disappointment. The faults are two: a very dull, trite story and inferior tunes. It's definitely below both *Follow the Fleet* and *Top Hat.* It's worth seeing, however, for the dancing, which is up to standard, for the top-notch comedy of Helen Broderick and Victor Moore, and for the Moment with the Policeman, in which the state power is showr nakedly in its role as the executive committee of the propertied class.

Girls' Dormitory is the initial American vehicle of the young French actress Simone Simon. Mr. Darryl Zanuck, with the aid of plentiful publicity and ecstatic close-ups, is trying to create a girl star for 20th Century-Fox. It is, however, impossible at this time to tell very much about the young lady's capabilities, since the film is so mediocre. It takes its cue from *Maedchen in Uniform* and suffers by comparison. What is lacking in *Girls' Dormitory,* which is the study of young love in a regimented German boarding school for girls, is everything that its pre-Hitler German relative had: simplicity, sincerity, and artfulness.

In *The Case of the Velvet Claws,* Detective Warren William continues to detect as debonairly as usual in another Perry Mason mystery, if that interests you. In this film, Claire Dodd seems definitely to have consolidated her position as a nice girl; perhaps thi is because in the other roles she was unco fortably capable of producing an impression extreme bitchiness. Everybody ought to better suited by the new arrangement.

BOB WHITE

Music

TWO invaluable books dealing with every phase of recorded music have been published this summer, thereby giving the music world its first documented accounts of the astonishing scope of phonograph recording in the past decade. For the music lover, Robert Darrell's *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia* (with foreword by Lawrence Gilman) is a veritable godsend, being as it is the first complete compilation of the recorded works of serious composers. Even the most ardent admirers of the phonograph will be astonished at the initiative of the companies in recording virtually all the great works in the symphonic, operatic, chamber-music, and solo-instrumental repertoires along with the hackneyed trash that used to be their sole output.

Darrell, who has devoted the past four years to this work, has included the available catalogues of every record company in the world, with the exception of the negligible output of the Soviet Union's gramophone trust. Every composer of any appreciable worth from Palestrina to our most dubious moderns is included in the *Encyclopedia,* with a brief biographical note and full details as to the recorded performances of his works: the artist, make and cost of the record, and catalogue number. Although the Gramophone Shop's initiative in financing this work is greatly to be commended, ther is little doubt that they will profit great' from it, since many of the imported recor ings are available only through their st

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plete. There is no listing or index of performances, which makes it well-nigh impossible for admirers of certain artists to find complete listings. Darrell's next duty to the public is to compile a list of the recorded performances of great artists which can be used in conjunction with the present book. No library or phonograph store in the country can afford to be without a copy of this *Encyclopedia*. With the exception of a few minor typographical errors, the text is a model of accuracy.

Another very useful book is *Rhythm on Record*, by Hilton Schleman (published by Odhams Press, London), which is devoted to popular records. Inasmuch as the chief value of jazz lies in performance and not in composition, the listing is by artists only, and it is a pleasure to report that the book is astonishingly complete and accurate. Every known soloist and orchestra from the Original Dixieland Jazz Band on down is included in this survey, including all the great American swing bands that exist only in the phonograph studios and the most miserable of British and Continental bands. Just as the works of Bach consume twenty-four pages in the *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia*, the performances of such artists as Fletcher Henderson, Duke Ellington, Louis Armstrong, Benny Goodman, and Bessie Smith run to scores of pages, including discs which have long since been cut out of catalogues and can be found only by rummaging in second-hand stores and Salvation Army depots. Schleman makes no effort at criticism in his brief biographies. The book is available at only one or two record stores in New York, whose names I will be glad to furnish.

HENRY JOHNSON.

Between Ourselves

NEXT week is the big week for us, when we change format and introduce new features which we hope will make the NEW MASSES a more satisfying magazine. Details of the coming changes are noted in the advertisement on Page 2 of this issue. Naomi Mitchison's article, telling how in collaboration with workers she wrote a collective novel, will appear next week.

Ella Winter is, of course, the widow of the late Lincoln Steffens.

The Friends of the NEW MASSES mysteriously announce that they have postponed the announcement of the name of the holder of the subscriptions to the Philharmonic Concerts. It will be revealed on Saturday, October 31, instead of September 9. We hope that will clear up the mystery.

In the first part of "The Equilibrists and Mr. Keynes," which appeared last week, Alfred Marshall should have been referred to as "that predominantly laissez-faire economist."

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